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Biography

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DR. MUEHLON'S DIARY



Dr. Muehlon's Diary

**Notes written early in the War
by Dr. Wilhelm Muehlon,
Ex-Director of Krupp's**

With an Introductory Note by the Translator

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTORY NOTE

DR. WILHELM MUEHLON, the author of the remarkable ~~Diary~~ here translated, has already won for himself world-wide fame by his courageous testimony to the truth. On May 7th, 1917, he addressed a Letter to Herr von Bethmann Hollweg (at that time Imperial German Chancellor), repudiating the German Government and all its works. This Letter, however, was not published till nearly a year later, ten days after the author's famous Memorandum had appeared in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of March 21st, 1918.* The Memorandum definitely stated that "the Austrians" had been with the German Emperor early in July, 1914, and that he had promised to give Austria *carte*

* The Letter was first published in a French translation by *L'Humanité* on March 31st, 1918: the German original appeared in the Swiss paper, *Die Freie Zeitung*, on May 4th, 1918. An English translation both of the Letter and of the Memorandum has been published under the title of "Revelations by an Ex-Director of Krupp's" (Hodder and Stoughton). The reader of the Diary will find the substance of the Memorandum on pp. 8-10.

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blanche in her dealings with Serbia, thus committing the German Government to a policy which was practically certain to provoke a European war. Who the Austrian representatives were was not stated; but Dr. Muehlon attributed a full share of the guilt to the German Emperor and named Herr Krupp von Bohlen and Herr Helfferich as his informants.

The Memorandum became known in Germany some time before its publication in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and appears to have created considerable excitement. It was debated, together with Prince Lichnowsky's Memoir,* at a meeting of the Main Committee of the Reichstag on March 16th, 1918.

The Imperial Vice-Chancellor, Herr von Payer, speaking for the Government, tried to dismiss the Memorandum by asserting that Dr. Muehlon was a "neurasthenic who could not even come into a room if it contained a few gentlemen with whom he was personally unacquainted. . . . The document could only be regarded as pathological." Readers of the Diary will be able to form their own conclusions as to this insinuation.

* An English translation of Prince Lichnowsky's Memoir, "My Mission to London, 1912-1914," has been published (Cassell and Company, Ltd.).

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They will find in it a record of the impressions made upon the author during the first weeks of the war. They will become acquainted with a man who was indeed, as every line shows, highly sensitive to moral considerations and placed moral values above material success—a man who could write on the invasion of Belgium, “Our irruption into Belgium means fearful moral injury to ourselves, our action is more unscrupulous than anything ever done by Bismarck or anyone like him, and even a victorious war would not restore to us the confidence of Europe and the rest of the world” (p. 40). We read how he went about among his friends in Berlin expressing his horror at what had been done, but that nowhere could he find any comprehension of his point of view. We can easily understand that among government circles in Berlin in August, 1914, such a man might appear to be a neurotic; for to the men among whom his lot was cast all criticism of the action of the Government would appear to be foolish sentimentality. And we can also well understand how the experiences through which he passed at that time may have left a permanent impression upon his character. But readers of the Diary will also be able to convince themselves of the

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clearness of his intellectual outlook, his knowledge and insight into the issues at stake, and they will read with interest how impressions which he recalls confirm the opinions widely held in neutral States. There can be no doubt that his judgment, and not that of his opponents, will be the final judgment of the civilised world.

Besides the Letter and Memorandum, Dr. Muehlon has recently published two articles in the Swiss Press—"Zur Wahrheit" ("Towards the Truth") and "Deutschland und Belgien" ("Germany and Belgium").* The first of these articles is a powerful rejoinder to official German denials of the facts revealed in the Memorandum, while the second is a vigorous defence of Belgium against the German Government's attempt to prove that she had failed to maintain her neutrality.†

The Diary itself was first published at Zürich (Orell Füssli) in May, 1918, under the title of "Die Verheerung Europas: Aufzeichnungen aus

* "Zur Wahrheit" was published in *Wissen und Leben* on May 1st, 1918, and "Deutschland und Belgien" in the same number of *Die Freie Zeitung* which contained the Letter to Herr von Bethmann Hollweg. Neither of these articles has yet appeared in an English translation, though extracts from "Deutschland und Belgien" were given in *The Times*.

† A good deal of the substance of Dr. Muehlon's defence of Belgium will be found in the Diary (see pp. 223, 224).

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den ersten Kriegsmonaten" ("The Devastation of Europe: Notes written during the first few months of the War").

Not much seems to be known in England about Dr. Muehlton's personal history. He is a Bavarian, as he tells us himself (p. 189), and he was one of the directors of Krupp's, the great German armament firm at Essen, "from shortly before the war till towards the end of 1914," when he at last succeeded in "freeing himself from the profession he loathed" (p. xi). It is said that, in resigning his directorship, he sacrificed a very large salary—£10,000 *plus* certain percentages—and that the other members of the Board tried to persuade him to remain by offering to make him chairman.

He appears to have had a long-standing connection with the German Foreign Office: at any rate, even after his resignation from Krupp's—and after he had become a "neurasthenic," according to Herr von Payer—he was employed by the German Government in negotiations with Roumania before that country became a belligerent. Some time early in 1917 he left Germany, bought an old country-house near Berne, and settled there with his family.



AUTHOR'S PREFACE

FROM shortly before the war till the end of 1914 the writer of the following Notes occupied a leading position in a German manufacturing firm with wide international connections. The very nature of his work breathed the spirit of war. When the war broke out, the writer renewed his efforts to free himself from the profession he loathed. The following Notes were written during the months that elapsed before he obtained his release. After one vain attempt to get them published, he left them untouched for more than three years ; and it was only three weeks ago that they came into his hands once more. In view of the vast development which the war itself and our insight into it have since undergone, the Notes now seem to him both imperfect and incomplete: nevertheless he believes it to be his duty to lay them before the public in their original form and without alterations. The only change he has made is to omit a few sections which dealt at some length

Author's Preface

with technical matters connected with his former profession.

The writer's chief aim is to put a question to the German reader—to say to him, “Is not this what you have long been thinking? Is it not your view as well as mine—your view, because all who reject trickery and violence, and strive after Truth and Justice, must think thus?”

By comparison with this chief aim, he feels it to be a matter of minor importance that the reader, whose trust has been so often abused, should believe the occurrences incidentally narrated in the Notes. The writer will be content if his account of these incidents rouses the reader to ponder his own experiences and impressions, and to draw from them such conclusions as he can.

March, 1918.

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Early in August, 1914.

WHEN, at the end of June, 1914, the news reached us that the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne and his wife had been murdered at Serajevo on the 28th by conspirators of Serbian race, my first impressions and my first words were :—

The European war is now a certainty. Austria must now take action, or her fate is sealed and all the peoples under the House of Hapsburg will break loose from the irresolute and impotent Dual Monarchy. But the traditions of that Monarchy make it certain that its action will be a war.

Austria will not make up her mind to grant to her subject-peoples, who have been refractory and at variance for so many years, the freedom for which they long ; she will not split herself up to form small independent States, though these would prove themselves the truest friends of the mother who gave them birth. On the contrary, the practice of the Dual Monarchy has always been to occupy and annex, thus constantly adding

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to its own embarrassments. It has never surrendered any territory of its own free will, but always fought on to maintain even the most untenable position, as, for example, in Italy in former times.

Moreover, nothing short of the moral effect produced by a generous and systematic emancipation of the subject-peoples would have sufficed to make Austria greater, in spite of territorial diminution, and to lessen the isolation of her position. The shots fired at Serajevo have made it too late for such a policy ; concession or inactivity would be interpreted as the most unmistakable symptom of weakness.

The Hungarians are largely to blame for the political backwardness of Austria-Hungary. Ever since they secured from Austria the greater part of the independence they desire, they have become, in plain terms, her political masters—but only because Austria has not severed all connections with them, a fact one can but regret. Nowadays Hungary is a far keener exponent than Austria of the policy of oppression in dealing with the peoples of alien race. Thus it is only Hungary's harsh and chauvinistic attitude towards the three million Roumanians of Transylvania which has caused the Dual Monarchy's difficulties with Roumania. Speaking generally, Hungary is surrounded by political hatred ; Vienna is never advised to adopt a policy

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of peaceable compromise, but always and only to take harsh measures.

The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was in itself a serious blunder and a source of extreme irritation. If Serbia rebelled against it, her resistance was intelligible enough. Had Austria-Hungary adopted a friendly attitude towards Serbia, conceding these territories to her so far as their inhabitants are Serbian, the Greater Serbia thus created would undoubtedly have proved a grateful friend to the Dual Monarchy, strengthening and protecting the latter's position in the Balkans with more success than Austria-Hungary's own policy of conquest can achieve.

But Austria-Hungary's attitude in the recent Balkan wars gravely compromised a policy of this kind—this easy and sensible method of attaching to herself a devoted neighbour; for she showed herself determined in all circumstances to prevent Serbia obtaining access to the Adriatic, preferring to interpose an artificial State like Albania, the northern half of which is Serbian, while its southern half is Greek. This step was bound to lead to deadly enmity with Serbia, to make Austro-Hungarian policy universally unpopular, to increase the prestige of Russia, and, in addition, to lead in the end to further dispute with Italy. For if Italy helped to promote the foundation of Albania, her object was to prevent any Austrian expansion

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along that coast. Since, on the other hand, Austria-Hungary was equally determined not to allow Italy to establish herself in Southern Albania (Valona), her best course would have been to concede Northern Albania to Serbia and Southern Albania to Greece. In the long run, this solution would have proved very satisfactory to Austria, and Italy would not have ventured to oppose it alone.

No doubt it must be admitted that Austria-Hungary, in adopting a different attitude, was only acting as other Great Powers act in similar circumstances. At all costs to prevent one's neighbour from waxing powerful; on no account to co-operate with one's neighbour in the attainment of a higher grade of civilisation; to keep everything for oneself:—any departure from these principles would be contrary to "self-preservation," as the States of Europe unfortunately interpret it. We should probably be laughed at if we suggested that a State may voluntarily diminish its territory and yet greatly increase its influence and power; that it is not a question of a State's might and brute strength, but of its moral level; and that no State can be conquered so long as it remains on a higher moral plane. Assuredly the ideal of a "United States of Europe" would long ago have been realised if the various groups of nations had been inspired by a more lofty type of political

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thought. What seems to us so important in our aims and in our conflicts is in reality so infinitely petty and unprofitable that it can never be made really intelligible to anyone outside Europe.

Now, the double murder at Serajevo would make it more than ever impossible for Austria-Hungary to change her political attitude, and yet would compel her to do something to assert her position. Hence it was obvious that she would want to have a war in any event, in order to inspire terror and respect in her enemies, both internal and external, and in order to be able to continue her existence. How long she could prolong her existence by such means is another matter. With a policy like hers, one lives from hand to mouth, struggling somehow out of the immediate *impasse*, and all the time vaguely, though unmistakably, aware that the end must come before long. As soon as to-day's danger has been overcome, fresh assaults on the enfeebled body will begin from within and without. But one tries to check the decay, to delude oneself into disregarding it, to gloss it over, to prop up the rotten system once more by inventing new political combinations. One is perfectly well aware that a genuine recovery is impossible, and that the whole procedure is nothing but self-deception and deception of others; yet one is determined not to draw the unavoidable conclusions.

Austria-Hungary's war had, of course, to be

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waged against an external enemy. She could not turn upon her own Serbo-Croat subjects and tear them to pieces before the whole world. On the contrary, apart from the initial excesses in which she indulged, she necessarily tried in every possible way to represent her Serbo-Croats as thoroughly loyal subjects. And, as a matter of fact, the murderers had certain connections with Serbia, where day by day their brethren of the same stock were inflaming racial hatred against Austria-Hungary—against that obsolete conglomeration of States, that colossus with its feet of clay, that harsh, egoistic and rapacious hypocrite. It made no difference that the murder itself was extremely inconvenient to the Serbian Government. Austria-Hungary was obliged to hold it responsible, because she desired to punish the Serbs as such, even though it was Austrian Serbs who had committed the crime. There would have been a general whispering and tittering amongst the Serbs had Vienna been content to issue an announcement that “the Serbian Government is in no way to blame for the murder, which was perpetrated by our own subjects on our own territory.” No! Austria was right enough in assuming that Serbian political hostility must be punished in Serbia, if one was not prepared to sanction it. If no legal grounds for such punishment existed, an excuse would have to be found. The Serbian Government could not be allowed to

Russia and the Balkan States

evade the war, nor the Serbian people to escape their punishment.

But if once it came to violent action against Serbia, every Government knew that Russia would not be an inactive spectator. For a blow against Serbia would also be a blow against Russia, who without being exactly the protector of the Southern Slav States exercised a general superintendence over them, and did so, especially in Serbia and Montenegro, with the free will and at the desire of Government and people alike. The mutual relation was more intimate than that existing between mere allies. After all, the Balkan wars had in the end appreciably shaken Austria-Hungary's prestige throughout the East of Europe, making her unpopular and also creating the impression that she was helpless, while Russian prestige had correspondingly risen. Had Russia tolerated a blow against Serbia, Austro-Hungarian influence would have been greatly strengthened right into Turkey, whereas Russian authority would have been far more than correspondingly weakened. Nobody had a right to assume that Russia would acknowledge defeat without drawing the sword.

Nevertheless, many well-informed people believed it would still be possible to avoid war *some-how*, without exactly explaining *how*. For in the

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last few years the menace of war had so often blown over that men had lost the power of imagining the actual occurrence of the monstrous fact. Moreover, for a whole fortnight there was an apparent calm; all Governments, including that of Serbia, expressed their detestation of the murder; and only the Austro-Hungarian and Serbian newspapers heaped insults on one another, whilst the Government at Vienna let nothing be known about its intentions.

On July 17th I had business in Berlin, and was given the following account by a thoroughly initiated personage:—

Immediately before the Kaiser started on his Scandinavian cruise a conference with the Austrians had taken place in Berlin. The Kaiser had assured them that this time he was with them through thick and thin. The Austrians had declared—with the assent of our Government—that a sharp Note would be despatched to Serbia within eight days. The Note was to take the form of an ultimatum with a time-limit of forty-eight hours and to contain all the demands which were necessary to secure for Austria-Hungary respect and tranquillity. These demands were for the punishment of all Serbian officers compromised by the murder, for the dissolution of all Pan-Serbian clubs, and in general for immediate satisfaction on a number of definite issues. I was under the

The Ultimatum to Serbia

impression that the text of the Note had not been agreed upon at all—undoubtedly a dangerous omission on the part of the German diplomatists, in view of the risk attaching to the venture. The Government at Vienna was thus in effect given *carte blanche*: Germany was committed to unconditional approval of all that might be contained in the Note.

A few days later another distinguished personage told me in substance what follows. He had spoken about this “dangerous omission” to his friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The Secretary of State had answered that they had certainly thought of collaborating in the drafting of the Note, but the Kaiser had given his assent so hastily and so unconditionally that it was no longer possible for the German representatives to introduce any demand or any qualification. The Secretary of State had in the end persuaded himself that he would be able to produce a good impression at Paris and St. Petersburg by declaring that he had not known the contents of the Note.

In my conversation in Berlin on July 17th I also learnt that the Kaiser had made the following positive promise: “Should Russia not acquiesce in Vienna’s demands on Serbia, but proceed to mobilise, he would forthwith declare mobilisation in Germany, and this would mean war.” The Austrians therefore returned to Vienna with the

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most far-reaching assurances conceivable. When I told my informant at the time that under those circumstances we were faced with inevitable and immediate war, he shrugged his shoulders and said that at any rate it looked like it.

I made use of my information in the quarters for which it was intended and, in doing so, I learned from the gentleman whom I have just described as a friend of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the Kaiser had expressed himself to the same effect in his presence also.

Nevertheless, I was surprised to find that the people with whom I associated still refused to admit that a war was close at hand. They did not change their language till eight days later, when the text of Vienna's Note to Serbia was actually before them. One can hardly conceive anything surpassing this Note in the harshness of its terms. It contained the gravest accusations against the Serbian Government itself, and it made demands such as one European State can hardly ever have made upon another. Austria-Hungary wanted to break with Serbia and to exclude all chance of mediation. The Note in truth contained nothing but *ex parte* assertions, no proofs of any kind; and it gave no time for testing its assertions, demanding, on the contrary, unconditional submission without discussion. Everyone now saw quite clearly that Austria-

Serbia's Concessions

Hungary was determined to act, was deliberately making extravagant demands in order to render all compromise and all wavering impossible, and believed she could only recover her lost prestige by striking a brutal blow.

Serbia made practically all the concessions demanded of her within the prescribed time-limit. She did so because she was shrewd enough to realise that, however much Serbia might humble herself, Austria-Hungary's game would have been lost so long as she had not actually drawn the sword. In my opinion, however, Serbia might have contented herself with a simple acceptance of all the terms of the Note, and Austria-Hungary would still have declared herself not satisfied (though in that case her position would have been still more uncomfortable), and would undoubtedly have said precisely what she in fact asserted with regard to the concessions actually made by Serbia, viz. that Serbia's compliance was full of a spirit of insincerity, being in reality an act of cynical derision and arrogance. In other words, the real situation was, as I explained at the beginning, that Austria-Hungary was determined on an immediate war with Serbia at all costs. The motives for the war were there, so to speak, in the atmosphere. There was no longer any need to put them into words, to define them. What happened was the explosion of the most intense fury—fury long

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suppressed, and only to be satisfied by an assault upon the enemy, whether he prayed for mercy or threatened, whether he submitted or resisted.

The Serbians realised this, mobilised, and left Belgrade even before the Serbian Note was dispatched to Vienna and before Vienna's reply was known. It is a highly significant fact that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador was able to declare the Serbian Note "unsatisfactory" immediately after he had received it, and that he broke off relations without having to inquire at Vienna whether the Ballplatz considered that its demands had been satisfied. And yet not one of these demands had been rejected.

What then was the state of feeling in Germany? All classes of the population interpreted Vienna's ultimatum to Serbia as meaning war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, and consequently the world-war. In view of our long-standing alliance, it was felt that we must abstain from all criticism and take our stand by the side of the Dual Monarchy, since a defeat—even a diplomatic defeat—of Austria-Hungary would be a defeat for Germany. The tension at once became extreme, because it was felt, further, that the true nature of the situation would soon be revealed and that decisions would be taken quickly, in order not to give the Triple Entente time to contrive some

War Welcomed by the Germans

cunning diplomatic manœuvre for cheating the Germans out of their greatest advantage, viz. their power of more rapid preparation.

It is also true to say that the German people was positively waiting impatiently for the explosion and welcomed it as a relief when it came. They had already been kept so often in excited expectation of war; German foreign policy had undergone such constant changes, had embarked on so many enterprises ending in nothing; the burdens of taxation for military armaments were so oppressive and had so steadily increased. And yet all the time the people had suffered more and more under the paralysing conviction that Germany's reputation in the world had not risen, but fallen. Germany had grown rich and her material power had increased; but the dislike manifested by foreign countries to German ways and characteristics had reached an incredible pitch. The Germans were looked upon as foreign matter in the European system—matter to be eliminated, dispersed, absorbed. The Germans—so the world's judgment went—were brutal in their policy, hard-hearted as rulers, unscrupulous in business, insignificant and pedantic as teachers, tactless and presumptuous when they appeared in public, without taste in their purchases, ridiculous when they tried to appear distinguished, cowards if it was a question of asserting their personal con-

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victions, unreliable when put to the test, cringing if they wished to learn, and unjust in their judgments on all things foreign. They were regarded as a kind of plague, and the wealthiest and most highly-placed Germans were made to feel the general aversion most of all. There was more inclination to tolerate the simple German of the old-fashioned kind, because he kept more to himself. All this was fully realised by all Germans, even by those in the humblest circumstances; every German, even though he had never crossed the frontier, knew that his fellow-countrymen were universally unpopular abroad, that people avoided them or showed open disgust at meeting them.

Now here was a terrible contradiction in the German self-consciousness; for the leaders of society in Germany itself made out that the German was the light of the world and the ideal for its future development. German morality and German power, German principles and German aims were more lofty (so they maintained) and more profound than those of all other nations. No one, indeed, knew precisely how far this was true, and no member of the German people believed the assertion in his heart of hearts. On the contrary, even in Germany itself, as the people well knew, the Germans were torn asunder by the sharpest antagonisms, so that the different sections

The German Self-Consciousness

felt themselves mutually insufferable. South was opposed to North, Catholics to Protestants; there was antagonism between Junkers, Democrats and Socialists, between the Kaiser and the Princes of the various Confederate States—and the list of such divisions might be enlarged indefinitely.

But the German people were chiefly impressed by the fact that the Poles, the Danes, and the native population of Alsace-Lorraine refused to be conciliated. For this seemed to prove that no foreigner was able to recognise the moral superiority of the ideals guiding the German rulers; that no foreigner was inclined of his own free will to stay and learn and adapt himself to German ways; that, indeed, not one of them would yield even to force—all of them choosing, so to say, to mount the scaffold rather than submit.

“Where then are the great ideals, the lofty programme of Germany?” people asked themselves. “Where is that more brilliant light which we Germans are supposed to bear aloft before the world, thus winning the title to leadership? We work hard and methodically, we have become more prosperous and more pretentious; but have we made equal progress in other directions? Have our other achievements kept pace with our material advance? Were we not of more significance for the civilisation of the world and for the progress of humanity in the time of our greatest political

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disunion and our extreme economic poverty than we are to-day ? ”

No more need be said. Germany was torn asunder with doubts, tossed in a medley of conflicting opinions, filled with mistrust of her own preachers and with pessimism at the course given by the official steersmen to the ship of state. The upshot of the matter was this : a group of Protestant Prussian bureaucrats, of officers, agrarians and manufacturers professed to be leading the nation on towards a great and splendid future ; but the people saw no advance. Those who disagreed with the ruling clique were expected to hold their tongues. Every would-be critic was silenced from the start, since he was treated as an outlaw and even as a social outcast. The one bond of union was the ever-growing burden of taxation, oppressive to all alike. No wonder that at last the German people was eager to put the matter to the test—that it felt as if it had shaken off a nightmare when it saw that “ now at last the struggle is to begin, now at last we shall know how we stand.” It is almost true to say that all anxiety as to the issue sank into the background before the overwhelming feeling that things could not go on as they were, that the situation must be cleared up, the burden must be shaken off. “ If the issue prove unfavourable, we shall change our whole outlook, shall become more unassuming and

German Press and the War

simpler, more friendly and better. And if we are successful, we—the people—shall have achieved the success. Then we shall be able to demand a life more worth living; we shall be able to force our present antagonists to come to terms as soon as we have overthrown the external enemy—the enemy who now surrounds us, misjudging and misunderstanding us.”

The extent to which the great masses of the people were influenced by such feelings (if they did not take the form of conscious reflections) was, I think, clearly shown by the behaviour of the Radical Press. For it was just the papers of the Left, e.g. the *Berliner Tageblatt*, which forthwith laid emphasis on the seriousness of the situation and its consequences, to the practical exclusion of all criticism. “It was time for the Government at last to take action, to put itself right; it must not be able to say it had been thwarted.” This then was the line taken by the identical papers whose normal attitude was that of the most vehement criticism of the Government’s policy and actions. The opposite section of the Press—the papers of the Right—of course followed the Government. It had no independent views of its own and was, in truth, far more anxious than the Radical Press, because it had no idea how intense was the feeling in the whole population—the feeling, penetrating right down to the lowest

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classes, that the existing state of things, both at home and as regards Germany's foreign relations, could no longer be maintained. Independent newspapers like the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* ventured indeed upon a little grumbling at first, urging that we had no cause to go to war about Serbia, that we could not simply resign ourselves to endorsing the policy of Austria-Hungary. The reason why the papers in question began by expressing such views was that they were most sincerely afraid the German Government was about to commit another of its "blunders." The foreign Press actually drew the incorrect inference from this attitude of the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* that the industrial magnates were not in favour of the war. It was, however, soon able to convince itself that the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* was eager to fall into line with all other sections of opinion the moment it became clear that the Government had adopted more resolutely than hitherto the paper's own favourite attitude, viz. that of hitting out with true Teutonic recklessness. The Press of the Centre likewise advocated without any reserve the unconditional support of Vienna, if only because the Dual Monarchy upholds Roman Catholicism in all the peoples under its rule.

The Social-Democratic papers alone raged furiously against Austria. Not a drop of German

German Socialists and the War

blood, they said, must be shed in such a cause : the proletariat must preserve the peace of the world—if necessary, by force. But in the end even the Socialist leaders gave up all resistance, joined the majority, and called for complete support of the Government. They took this line when they saw that their followers unanimously demanded an end to all disputing and had no desire to adopt an exceptional position, but that all they wanted was to give the Government a clear path, so that it could act with the whole united people behind it, and so that failure might result in the Government's final condemnation, whilst, on the other hand, success might win for the masses of the German people new life, gratitude and progress. The many millions of Socialist workmen were anxious not to separate themselves on this occasion from the nation of which they formed a part—the nation which they hoped to win over to their side more and more. After all, the nation as a whole had to wage the war and endure its sufferings : so it was one's duty to stand by it, not to injure it and fight against it by refusing to obey the Government. The Socialists suddenly felt they had had enough of their political quarrels. They determined to throw in their lot with the people as a whole, to ally themselves with it more intimately than before, and thus eventually with its help to attain their own ends too with greater

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ease. It was certainly not from any love of the Government that they acted as they did.

I will here add a short summary of the further course of events between the Ultimatum to Serbia and the outbreak of war, so far as they became known. As soon as diplomatic relations were broken off, Austria immediately began the war against Serbia, in order to confront Europe with a *fait accompli*. Simultaneously, however, she announced—at any rate so far as the Berlin account went—that she had no intention of making any territorial acquisitions: her sole purpose was to chastise Serbia and to secure lasting tranquillity and neighbourly relations—provided that, and so long as, the war remained a local one, restricted to Serbia and herself. Even the German public saw through the hollowness of this announcement. The Dual Monarchy's intervention might have the most far-reaching and lasting consequences without a formal incorporation of Serbia. In the probable event of Montenegro coming to Serbia's assistance, Austria-Hungary would have her hands free once more. Moreover, there had already been statements at Vienna and Buda-Pesth to the effect that the Sandjak must be recovered, so as to drive a wedge between Serbia and Montenegro. Austria—it might be assumed—did not include the Sandjak when she spoke of "Serbia." Altogether,

Negotiations

people were agreed that it was quite impossible to anticipate the exact pretext Austria-Hungary would use at some subsequent date, when she came to revise her promise of maintaining Serbia's territorial independence: anticipation of this kind had often proved impossible on previous occasions too.

Russia at once announced in the most definite terms that she could not remain an uninterested spectator if Austria-Hungary commenced military operations against Serbia. Germany stated in the most unequivocal language that the Austro-Serbian dispute must remain "localised." England, realising that Russia would not accept this point of view, proposed to adjust the quarrel by bringing the question at issue before a Conference of the Great Powers—Austria-Hungary to suspend hostilities in the meantime. France supported this proposal. Germany expressed the opinion that a Great Power like Austria-Hungary could not be dragged before a Conference: it would be best to encourage an exchange of views between the Austrian and Russian Cabinets. Austria-Hungary refused all interference by a third party. Things had gone too far, she said; the suspension of hostilities was no longer possible. Italy seemed at first to approve the English proposal, but eventually identified herself with the German and Austrian point of view.

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In the meantime the Kaiser had returned from his Scandinavian cruise, having arranged from the first not to extend his trip so far North as on previous occasions. The French President only heard of the situation created by Austria-Hungary's action when he arrived at Stockholm on returning from his visit to St. Petersburg; he hurried back to Paris without calling at Christiania and Copenhagen as he had planned. The eyes of the whole world were turned to the Kaiser at Berlin. Many Germans feared there would again be a long to-and-fro of negotiations, that the Kaiser would once more change his mind—the only result being that Russia would gain time for her military preparations. Even the Imperial Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told their most intimate friends it was simply impossible to predict whether there would be war or not: no one could say what was going to happen. The Press was provisionally ordered to allay excitement by holding out prospects of an agreement. It will not be possible till some later date to get a really accurate and complete knowledge of all that went on, whether openly or behind the scenes. All I purpose to do here is to record a few more events as they appeared to me on the first day of the war, judging from such information as was then available.

Russia gave the official order for a partial mobilisation of her forces on the Austro-Hungarian

Mobilisation

frontier on July 30th, though the actual mobilisation is said to have begun two days earlier. Russia explained that she could not remain inactive during the diplomatic conversations so long as Austria-Hungary refused to suspend her military operations against Serbia. The Dual Monarchy replied by mobilising its whole forces, having hitherto announced the mobilisation of only eight Army Corps against Serbia alone. Berlin let it be known in St. Petersburg that a threat against Austria-Hungary would be regarded as a threat against the German Empire, since the *casus fæderis* would have arisen; Russia must immediately cancel her partial mobilisation against Austria-Hungary. Instead of doing so, however, Russia mobilised her entire forces, her Navy as well as her Army; whereupon Berlin immediately delivered an Ultimatum in St. Petersburg—"Demobilisation within twelve hours or we declare war." Simultaneously Berlin inquired in Paris whether France would remain neutral in the event of a war between Germany and Russia. As of course a satisfactory answer was not forthcoming either from St. Petersburg or from Paris, Germany ordered mobilisation and declared a "state of war" against Russia and France.

From now onwards I propose to make a few entries, so far as possible every day, and to leave what I write without alteration. For even if there

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should be reasons for correcting or completing my notes, I feel it to be of more importance to keep an unobscured image of the moods aroused in me at the time and of my successive opinions and experiences.

The commencement of the war was marked in Paris by an abominable crime, Jaurès being shot in a café by a youthful patriot. The French Government hastened to express its horror. And in truth Jaurès was an ornament to his country, a man of very great and well-deserved influence. It was his constant endeavour to perfect his own ideas and those of his countrymen, to encourage devotion to the progress of Humanity, to the love of peace, a better understanding and justice. And all the time he was animated by an ardent patriotism and never belittled his countrymen. Only a few days before, speaking at the International Congress of Socialists at Brussels, he had emphasised the French people's love of peace, and warmly defended his country when the question arose whether the Social Democracy of Europe would prove strong enough to prevent the world-war. Already at this Congress it had been only too apparent that international bonds of union were too weak, even between Social Democrats, the moment nation was divided against nation, and that the Socialist leaders would identify themselves with their native soil.

“State of War” in Germany

Jaurès was certainly not a traitor, as his murderer said ; he was a man of great enlightenment, far in advance of his contemporaries. The shooting of Jaurès, as soon as France put on her armour, demonstrated in a horrible manner the destruction which war brings to everything of high moral and spiritual value : it demonstrated also the level to which war reduces us owing to the type of man and the frame of mind it encourages. Whether the penalty for the murder is eventually exacted or not, no longer affects the issue ; it is sufficient to remember that a normal young patriot actually believed he was serving his country by committing this crime.

The declaration of a “state of war” in Germany at once makes all open and honest interchange of ideas impossible. The newspapers are only allowed to publish news approved by the Government, the right of holding meetings ceases, all traffic is controlled, and the civil authorities yield place to the military. There is no longer any means of obtaining a reliable picture of the moods and opinions of people beyond one’s immediate environment. It produces a peculiar and a deep impression, this exclusion of everything except official news and military orders which are enthusiastically echoed by the entire Press without a word of criticism. One is driven to believe that

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the public has lost all desire to criticise or oppose : it seems as if nobody wants to discuss things even with his most intimate friends, as if nobody were interested in anything any longer except in official communications and commands.

Since the order for mobilisation I find driving in my motor too distressing ; I shall give up using it as soon as I can do so without exciting attention. The people will, from now onwards, have to take upon themselves the terrible drudgery of war, and I can no longer bear to drive past them in my car.

Many members of my staff went off to join their regiments at once, and many more are volunteering. I confess I am astonished to see our young men—even the youngest and most spoilt—all hurrying off to find a place in some regiment or other. On the whole, one cannot help recognising that at least the better classes are full of enthusiasm. No father complains at the sight of his sons going off to the war or attempts to hold back a son who volunteers for service. On the contrary, parents seem to urge their sons to join the ranks quickly and punctually.

It depresses me to see them—these reservists, marching to the station in large detachments, escorted by soldiers and military police, each of them carrying his belongings in a cardboard box, some of them accompanied by their sweethearts.

Patriotic Manifestations

I can no more look them in the face than if a crime were being committed against them and I were an accomplice. My sense of guilt is principally due to the fact that they are all of them *forced* to serve, and are not volunteers.

In other respects this big manufacturing town is but little disturbed. One hears patriotic songs in the streets at night—young fellows singing with hoarse voices and coarse expression, as if to provoke somebody to a brawl; no trace of any more refined emotion can be detected in their strains. When many of them are gathered together, their one idea, I believe, is to impress one another, all other thoughts being simply driven out of their minds for the time being. Probably there is a great charm in the whole situation for those who have not yet become reconciled to the monotony of a profession, to the monotony even of family life—in other words, for the majority of young people. There is a great charm in feeling all the ties of peace relaxed, in setting out upon unimaginable adventures in unknown countries for an unknown length of time. That their motive is a genuinely intelligent patriotism I am less inclined than ever to believe.

One evening when mobilisation was being expected I went to the square in front of the theatre in our town. Immense crowds used to gather here every day, to make patriotic demonstrations and

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to look at the telegraphic despatches and illuminated pictures projected by the publishers of a newspaper on one of the walls of their office. There was indeed a vast multitude of people, densely packed together, with many policemen in their midst. Whilst waiting for sensational announcements, quite young lads—almost children—started to sing as if it was all a frolic, and stationing themselves on some spot raised above the crowd beat time with hands and feet; but it never came to a proper song, if only because rival performers kept striking in with yells of “Hurrah!” and “Three Cheers!” There was unmistakable delight at being able to make a row with the approval of the police. A few of the grown-up men were serious and silent, or exchanged questions and conjectures on the subject of the mobilisation, while the usual wretched portraits of the Kaiser, the Crown Prince and other popular idols appeared on the wall. But, on the whole, the people I saw were, both individually and collectively, so dirty, so bumptious, rude and inconsiderate—in a word, so outlandish and unsympathetic—that I withdrew from the hubbub, from the piercing catcalls and the coarse laughter, with a profound sense of shame and depression such as I have but seldom experienced. There was not a single fine or interesting feature in the crowd's behaviour, not a trace of any inspiring or elevating emotion.

The German Masses

The so-called "warlike spirit" seems, on analysis, to depend simply and solely on the persistence of a sufficiency of brutal instincts and docile stupidity in the people. It does not in the least presuppose any judgment on the justice or injustice of their cause. They neither can form, nor do their rulers intend them to form, any judgment of the kind. They are just the impressionable, mighty multitude—a plaything in the hands of the master of the hour, a raging ocean for the shipwrecked. To-day they walk before the military band of the soldiers going on guard; to-morrow they will demonstrate for universal suffrage; the day after, they will shout "Hurrah!" to welcome the Prince as he passes through: but always they are more inclined to prove the victims of their craving for sensation than to base themselves on any reliable instinct and uphold any firm conviction.

And so it comes about that they welcome even war with exultation, singing "Die Wacht am Rhein" (since no other mode of expression is familiar to them) or shouting "Three cheers for the Kaiser!" But their singing and shouting do not ring true. It is easy to see that their words belie their real meaning. Moreover, to judge by my own observation, only an insignificant minority of those who have to go to the front take part in the demonstrations in favour of the war. Those

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who demonstrate are people of a very different type: people who do not join the ranks, but wax enthusiastic if things go well, are delighted if everything gets into the most unholy confusion, complain loudly if they have to suffer—and would howl down our leaders if the war were to end in disaster. The people who are called to arms wait till they get near the station and then begin to bawl their songs—that being the correct thing to do. But when once the soldiers have experienced the terrible seriousness of battle, when once they have discovered that the laurels of which they dream are not to be plucked like flowers on a country stroll, they will be the first to change their mood, even though they will of course continue to do their duty. Enthusiasm at the beginning is cheap, and easy to excite. It cannot be maintained unless one is fighting for a nobler cause and greater ideals than those of the opponent—fighting to bring liberation and progress even to the enemy. To aim simply at crushing the foe is a vain undertaking in the twentieth century. He may be physically defeated, but morally he will still be the victor; and nowadays it is the moral victory that counts in the eyes of the civilised world, which still exists, even though the governments of the moment are not its true representatives.

Spy Mania

August 4th.

There is something sinister in the speed with which the maddest rumours find willing listeners. Germany is supposed to be swarming with spies ; the populace denounces innumerable persons as suspect, and takes violent measures against them. Unfortunately, the public has been repeatedly invited by official decrees to co-operate as special constables, and this has led to dangerous situations and confusions. Innumerable German officers and soldiers were molested and put into prison, being taken for disguised spies. The story (unquestionably false) had been officially circulated that eighty French officers, disguised in Prussian uniforms and starting from Holland in motor-cars, had attempted to cross the German frontier ; and in consequence the uncritical populace in every part of Germany conceived it to be its duty to establish the identity of all unknown persons in uniform. When it was reported that Russian officers had been arrested in Berlin disguised as nuns and that other spies had been detected wearing female clothing of a different kind, the populace set to work hunting for suspicious nuns and women all over the country. There were said to be many motor-cars full of gold on their way from France to Russia, and the public was officially invited to help to seize them. In consequence, people set upon all motor-cars in such a frantic manner, and such a

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nuisance was caused, that the hunt had to be called off again to prevent further damage. And, in general, the authorities are already beginning to calm down the popular agitation once more—a very necessary proceeding, if we are not to have a regular reign of terror. I add here a few specimens of the nonsense systematically and officially circulated by Wolff's Bureau.

At the very beginning of the complications we read: "To-day a French doctor, assisted by two French officers in disguise, attempted to infect a well at Metz with plague and cholera bacillus; the criminals were caught and shot." All over Germany the newspapers brought out special editions with the above *communiqué* in big type and the most extravagant comments upon it. I did not believe it. No sane Frenchman, even if excited and distracted to the utmost, would be guilty of such an abominable outrage. But I am sorry to have to record that such lying reports found universal credence amongst us. There is a gentleman here who has always been in closest touch with the best French artistic and literary circles. His mode of life and his home show the influence of French taste—a fact to which he largely owes his position in German society, where he is somewhat of a leader. He is, moreover, in virtue of his birth, connections and position, a German of the most distinguished type. Yet this same gentleman

False Official Reports

actually said to me quite calmly : “ I have no hesitation in believing it. That is the French all over.” And when subsequently our official *démenti* appeared, he said, “ It is true, all the same. The denial is only to prevent a panic.”

According to another of these false official announcements, the greatest tunnel in Germany—the one at Cochem on the frontier—was destroyed ; and the innkeeper, Nicolai of Cochem, and his son were shot for this act of *sabotage*. A day later, the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* informed its readers that it had made careful investigations into this piece of information (reported by Wolff) and had ascertained that Nicolai, who had attempted to commit this abominable crime, was a naturalised German, French by birth, and an inhabitant of Cochem. It was matter for congratulation, the paper said, that the criminal was not a genuine German. The next day the sub-prefect of Cochem announced that there was not a word of truth in the supposed plot ; Nicolai was alive and a highly respected citizen, whilst his son was serving in a Prussian regiment.

Such thoughtless stupidity leads one to serious reflection. How often, I wonder, could the origin of political embitterment be traced to fanciful tales, credulously accepted and perhaps deliberately invented ? Announcements have been published everywhere in spaced type, to the effect that France

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violated international law by opening hostilities on the frontier without a previous declaration of war. Even if hostilities had been commenced by the French, this announcement would still contain a slander, for the very fact of opening hostilities might in itself constitute a declaration of war. It is not universally recognised as a requirement of international law that an official declaration of war must precede hostilities. Moreover, the frontier-skirmishes in question were not reported till August 2nd; but mobilisation had already been declared by both sides, and even the ultimatum to France had been delivered as early as August 1st, so that war had been announced before the skirmishes took place. Germany's formal declaration of war against France followed on August 3rd, and there was no real necessity for it: the utmost one can say is that we attached importance to an explicit declaration. Russia, it may also be noted, made attacks on the frontier the same night (August 2nd), according to the German reports—i.e. as soon as the German ultimatum had expired. I may add that I totally disbelieve one particular act of hostility attributed to the French on August 2nd, viz. the throwing of bombs by French airmen in the neighbourhood of Nuremberg. This at least I regard as purely imaginary, because the French airmen would have had plenty of work to occupy them at more important points nearer

Popular Delusions

the frontier. There is not a single authentic instance of the appearance of a hostile airman in the interior of Germany, although a feverish look-out was kept all over the country and supposed enemy aviators were frequently fired at. The aeroplanes thus fired at, if they were really aeroplanes at all, will have been some of our own, for the public would not have known their distinctive marks and would not have realised that German airmen might be flying over their heads. I am confirmed in this conjecture by the fact that in the meantime an order has been issued prohibiting all further firing at airmen.

At times like this people in all countries probably lose their heads more or less, and do not hesitate to believe the enemy guilty of the most improbable (and often, alas, the most abominable) crimes. My task however, as I see it, is to hold up before myself and my countrymen our own faults and weaknesses, not those of the enemy. We must not plead, "The enemy does the same;" we must behave better, so that the enemy too may follow our example, and respect us into the bargain.

I have still to put the finishing touch to these pessimistic reflections of mine by referring to the behaviour of the Kaiser himself. He had a lively exchange of telegrams with the Czar, in the course of which he laid stress on the traditional cordial friendship between Germany and Russia, and

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emphatically insisted that, since Austria-Hungary had no desire for territorial conquest in Serbia, Russia might declare herself satisfied. The Czar replied that Russia could not possibly acquiesce in Austria-Hungary's action against Serbia, and begged the Kaiser to mediate between St. Petersburg and Vienna. The Kaiser declared himself ready to mediate, provided Russia took no military measures signifying war. The Czar informed the Kaiser he could not cancel mobilisation, because of the Austrian preparations; Russia, however, would take no hostile step, so long as negotiations had not been broken off. In the meantime it became known in Germany that Russia had mobilised her entire forces, whereupon we immediately delivered our ultimatum and declared war. But this was not enough for us: the Kaiser published the telegrams that had passed between himself and the Czar, and circulated semi-official or official accounts reproaching Russia with the most disgraceful perfidy ("Muscovite treachery") and calumniating the Czar's personal character in the most outrageous fashion. The result is a rupture between two rulers—a public rupture of a kind that can never be healed, that was neither necessary, nor profitable, nor just. For, after all, it was surely well known that the Czar himself is not a free agent; that if he acted, he was at best impelled to act; and that the Russian Government

Kaiser and Czar

was naturally determined that Germany, who was pressing on with all her energy, should not be allowed to exploit Russia's disadvantage (viz. the slowness of her mobilisation), just as Germany was equally determined not to surrender the advantage of her own quick mobilisation. I can see no "perfidy" in the public order given for Russian mobilisation. But even if it were a case of "perfidy," why should the Kaiser make such a personal quarrel of the whole matter? Why need the Czar's moral annihilation be added to the declaration of war? Is it any advantage to the monarchical principle, or to the Kaiser's own position, that he should make such an exhibition of himself? Surely he does not believe he is strengthening his own position by discrediting the dynasty of the Romanoffs; or that he would win increased respect from the rulers of other nations, if his accusations—shouted to the whole world in the first heat of the moment—should prove true? Self-restraint would be far wiser for him, more especially in view of the shocking effect he produces on the tone and attitude of our Press and other guardians of public opinion; for, following his lead and example, they scatter abuse to right and left without measure or limit.

And even apart from this, we already hold the record for slander. The English weigh their words with perfect coolness, speaking of war without

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passion or hatred, as though it were regulated by an agreement between gentlemen. The French make it their first business to extol themselves and their cause, but do not conceive it to be their most urgent task to drag their opponent through the mire in the brutal, vituperative fashion we choose to adopt. And even if anyone were to show me that the Press of this or that country has on occasion adopted a very violent tone, the Kaiser's outburst nevertheless remains without a parallel in the behaviour of sovereigns. Neither the Czar, nor the King of England, nor the Emperor of Austria uttered a single word involving themselves personally in the controversy. By acting in this way the Kaiser will eventually so expose his dignity and take upon himself so heavy a burden of responsibility that his position will become untenable. Nobody speaks of this to-day. But if things went badly, all men's fingers would point to him; whilst even if things go well, the people will take the speaking-trumpet out of his hands. It must be ascribed in no small measure to His Imperial Majesty's example that the Press is already breaking out into ugly cries of "*Vae victis*"—and again "*Vae victis*," in constant iteration.

There are two truths which must be dinned into the Germans' ears—that no amount of physical power and violence can make up for the lack of moral superiority, and that threats do not

Invasion of Belgium

intimidate an opponent, but increase his resistance a hundredfold and make him imperishable. No wonder we hear foreigners denouncing not Russia but Germany as the dangerous country, the land of brutality and despotism; no wonder they point to the Kaiser as the embodiment of the evil instincts of Germany, as the instigator of unrest in Europe—the instigator who must be removed!

August 5th.

Yesterday the Reichstag adopted all the motions before it without a debate, including the vote of credit for five milliard marks.* The same evening I received a proof of the Wolff Bureau's full telegraphic report of the meeting. I was just reading out the Chancellor's speech: suddenly I was unable to go on, being overwhelmed with a real shudder of horror at the words, "At this moment our troops have already entered Belgium. Necessity knows no law. We shall repair this wrong."

I scarcely had time to say, "That is very bad: what will Europe, what will the little States think of us?" when the further news reached me by telephone that England declared war on us an hour ago. Immediately afterwards more telegrams from Wolff arrive at the house—Grey's

* 250 million pounds.—*Translator.*

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declaration in the House of Commons announcing beforehand that the violation of Belgium would mean war with Germany ; rejection of the German ultimatum to Belgium demanding a free passage into France.

Gathering my thoughts together, I formed the following conclusions : Our irruption into Belgium means fearful moral injury to ourselves, our action is more unscrupulous than anything ever done by Bismarck or anyone like him, and even a victorious war would not restore to us the confidence of Europe and the rest of the world.

I saw at once that nothing but strategic reasons had caused our invasion of Belgium. Assuming the soundness and cogency of those reasons, still our whole behaviour to Belgium was so brutal, so like a sudden piece of treachery, so opposed to all the political principles and obligations to which we were committed, and so little prepared for by any diplomatic action, that Belgium could not possibly have agreed to our demands without making herself despicable for all time. Belgium's acquiescence, therefore, was most certainly not to be expected. That being so, our action would inevitably involve the crushing of Belgium, the destruction of the Belgian towns, the annihilation of the Belgian armies of defence, and—worse still—the suppression of the entire population, which was bound to defend itself against the

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invader with the utmost indignation. All this, again, would involve an expenditure of time and energy hardly less than would be required even by the most hard-fought battles on the German-French frontier, to say nothing of the considerable enlargement and complication in the theatre of war that our invasion of Belgium must entail.

To-day I visited everybody who was likely, as I thought, to take an unprejudiced view of our outrage against Belgium and to form a just appreciation of its significance. I made no secret of my own horror. Alas! Not a single person showed any understanding of the position. "If we had not invaded Belgium," one of them said, "the French would have done so." I replied that I did not believe it; for why should the French commit themselves to such an adventure, thus inevitably dissipating their forces, which in any case were inferior to ours? At any rate, we might have waited without any danger, leaving it to the French to initiate such measures. Spies would have given us timely information of the beginning of any French move in this direction. It is impossible to believe the rumours now current that the French are already in Belgium: their whole purport is incredible. Besides, it needs but a little reflection to convince oneself that the Belgians, if that were so, would oppose the French precisely as they are now taking their stand against

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us. The Belgians have always dreaded a violation of their independence and neutrality above everything. Before our invasion Belgian public opinion, as all the papers showed, was not in the least unfavourable to us. But even if public opinion in Belgium were completely in favour of France, I regard it as quite impossible that the Belgians would have made common cause with the French. After all, they were not in the least convinced that France was going to win, and they would have had every reason to fear our vengeance. No! The Belgians, like the Dutch, were determined to defend their neutrality against all attacks: had they given way to anyone, it would have been to the Germans, whose superior power they feared above all.

Another of my friends said: "You must trust our Great General Staff. That will know well enough why it ordered the invasion of Belgium, and would never have done so without the most cogent reasons. Presumably our intention is, by a menace directed against the French from their northern frontier, to compel their strategists to turn towards the north, thus entirely upsetting the advance of their armies against Alsace-Lorraine. You can imagine the confusion this will produce among the French, especially as we shall subsequently break through Alsace-Lorraine after all, thus falling upon the enemy from two sides.

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Possibly the idea is to remain entirely on the defensive in Alsace-Lorraine, and to save bloodshed by advancing to Paris through Belgium. However that may be, our duty is not to criticise, but to surrender our personal judgment." To this I replied : " The invasion of Belgium may very likely promise strategic advantages, but I have not heard a single valid argument to prove its necessity, which is a very different matter. The King of the Belgians, a German Prince, rightly insisted that strategic considerations ought not to count before the obligations of sworn treaties. To a considerable extent, moreover, even the strategic advantages disappear if we are unable to count on a free passage."

Another friend said : " As to the Belgian business, it doesn't matter in the least whether we are right or wrong, whether we are driven by necessity or are free agents. The main point is—we are the stronger. We are proving this to the whole world, and if anybody still has any fault to find with us, we shall go on hitting him on the mouth till he has had enough." The speaker was one of the best-educated and refined Germans to be met with anywhere, and he occupies an eminent position—in common with all the personages here cited, as I may remark in passing. " It is amazing," I said to him, " how little an international conscience is as yet

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developed in Germany. On such principles not even the Romans 2,000 years ago could have maintained their empire. Their strength lay not only in their military forces, but above all in their justice, on which all men could rely, and in their active goodwill towards all peoples, great and small. But the German of to-day is lacking in other qualities besides these. If German policy were based on nothing but self-interest and egoistic calculation, it would indeed be deficient in all the more generous and lofty aims, but it would be nothing like so contemptible as it is now owing to the large admixture of brutality in its composition. That will bring its own Nemesis, as soon as all peoples have realised that any day they are liable to suffer Belgium's fate at the hands of Germany. I respect the King of the Belgians because he refused to submit to degradation. He would have suffered an ignominious fate had he been permitted to retain his kingdom by the favour of Prussia, and had the Kaiser tapped him on the shoulder in gracious mockery and given him boisterous assurance of his friendship."

The case of Luxembourg, which we have also occupied, is perhaps different. This country was too small to defend itself at all, even for a moment, and one can understand the Grand Duchess making no attempt at resistance, so as

Occupation of Luxembourg

to save her little country and its people from a terrible fate. And since Luxembourg would have been equally unable to defend itself against the French, there would, after all, have been some justification for the German initiative as a measure of prevention. Nevertheless it remains significant that the French made no attempt to anticipate us by breaking into Luxembourg either. And our simultaneous advance into Belgium gives a worse appearance to our invasion of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, whose inhabitants, like those of Belgium, will have formed their own opinion of German morality—an opinion that will remain unalterable for generations.

August 6th.

Neither in public nor in private is there a single voice of protest on the subject of Belgium. In an article in the *Kölnische Zeitung* the well-known clergyman, Traub, declares, with a rashness typical of Protestant Prussia, that “anyone who would venture to criticise this step is a traitor. The Chancellor’s confession that we were committing a wrong converted that wrong into a right.” This is the kind of stuff the world may expect to hear from men described in Germany as liberal in their views, unorthodox, and inclined to the Left in politics!

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Whilst in Germany there is neither criticism nor exchange of views, and one has to choose between a corpse-like obedience and outlawry, in England, according to the papers, large classes are protesting against the war. The news gives us pleasure; but here, in our own country, it is our duty to sacrifice intelligence as well as life and property to the Government. It is wrong to question one's own conscience or other people whether what is ordered agrees with humanity's sense of justice. And this is the country which fancies it can rule other nations—a country built upon nothing but coercion, with no spontaneous development of public opinion to sustain it. The way in which the Kaiser dealt with the Reichstag's party leaders yesterday is very characteristic of conditions in Germany. All of a sudden he says, "And now come forward, every one of you; give me your hands, and vow to stand by me and to endure till the last breath." Each of them gives his hand, because he could hardly refuse in the Kaiser's own palace and because he does not want to mar "the great hour." This method of extorting a solemn promise, which could have no value unless spontaneously offered, is very simple, but assuredly unworthy. The Kaiser's next action was well in keeping with the whole scene. Turning to one of the Deputies who was about to go to the front,

The Kaiser and Party Leaders

and passing from the solemn to the jovial tone, he exclaimed, "Now let us give them a sound thrashing," and accompanied the words with a suitable gesture of the arm. Yet there is great exultation all over Germany at this inspiring vow and vigorous Imperial utterance.

"I no longer know of any parties: henceforward I know only Germans," the Kaiser also said. Let us make a note of this saying, against the time when peace returns and the conflict of parties begins afresh. No party will fail to increase its demands, and there will be more terrible disunion in domestic politics than ever. Not to mention conflicts of class, race and creed, the antagonisms between the different federated States will be increased instead of diminished. The only way to weld the various German races into a united nation would be to put an end to Prussian hegemony and annihilate the ruling classes in Prussia, together with the ideas they represent.

I cannot help thinking, however, that grave internal disturbances must arise even during the war. The military enthusiasm that inspires all classes to-day will soon have vanished. The first hard battles, with their heavy casualties, will, I think, suffice to bring a revulsion of feeling; people will turn first serious and then war-weary. To-day, it is true, many are keen to serve—those for whom the daily struggle for a livelihood has

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proved too hard, who wish to shirk their responsibilities, who hope for rapid promotion and expect great fresh opportunities after the war. Everyone is anxious to join—especially to join the Landsturm,* which has already been partly called up and is not expected to be exposed to any risk. Many Germans are tempted by the prospect of receiving food, uniform, and a large measure of authority from the State, and of loafing about for a time without having to trouble themselves about their normal responsibilities. The State has summoned them; the State must be answerable for everything. State, municipality and private persons organise innumerable institutions for their assistance and relief. “For the present and for the future”—so thinks the soldier—“constant assistance will be forthcoming for myself and for my family. The State, the parish and my employer will owe me every consideration both now and after the war.” But it will not be long before a different mood prevails. Noisy patriots will try to drown it with their clamour. But those at home will feel in their hearts a more and more imperious craving for their menfolk at the front; and the latter—the wiser for a gruesome experience and profoundly disappointed, whatever may be the ultimate issue—will long for home with a yearning more and more intense.

* The Last Reserve.—*Translator.*

How Wars Arise

How long after this war will the political wirepullers have to wait for its experiences to be forgotten, or for memory to have cast such a glamour over them that the people can once more be impressed with tales of "menacing danger" and "the prospect of a glorious future"? Oh, that the nations of Europe would choose true sons of the people to represent them! If they would but take their destiny into their own hands, learn to know each other better, themselves prescribe the canons for their own lives! Then they would realise in a flash that the thoughts and desires of all are identical; the whole Continent would become the home of a single, united people; all tariffs would disappear from within it, leaving no Customs frontiers except the sea; everyone would be allowed to speak his native language, and no nation would wish to oppress, partition or despise another. Not the modern views of the peoples of Europe, not their own most vital instincts, are responsible for the wars that still arise to-day. It is for the alien ideals of a small clique that the peoples have to fight. Wars spring from situations of danger which a small clique has conjured up, though the peoples in their entirety must be held responsible. For, full of credulity towards their rulers, they allow themselves to be made mistrustful of one another, and remain a stupid herd

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at the mercy of phantom-fears and superstitions. Nothing is more terrible than such docile herds, in which veritable epidemics of emotion can be excited at will. Always spiritually blind, they enact evil and good indifferently and know not what they do. They are borne on the mighty current of some popular movement, heedless whether it be led by an angel, dominated by a devil, or driven madly onward by a phantom. Popular movements—those, at least, which end in acts of violence, whether their aim be evil or ostensibly good—ought to be no longer possible. We have already reached this stage in regard to religion. Differences of religion and creed still exist and leave their mark on nations as on families; but it would hardly be possible to arouse a popular movement for a religious war in the Europe of to-day, intensely intolerant as the religious ideas of some individuals may still be.

August 7th.

Italy remains neutral. The reasons given are, firstly, that the *casus fœderis* (an attack on Germany) has not occurred; secondly, that Berlin and Vienna did not fulfil the terms of the treaty of alliance by taking Italy into their confidence and consulting her from the outset, but confronted her with a *fait accompli*; thirdly (so it is alleged), that her undefended coasts make it impossible

Franz Josef

for her to incur the enmity of England. Moderation of tone towards Italy is officially recommended: no doubt there are good reasons for this policy. I had always thought it likely that Italy would be unable to take the field as an ally of Austria-Hungary. The policy of the Triple Alliance will have been justified, if Italy's regard for the past now prove sufficient to prevent her breaking out into hostilities against Austria-Hungary. Such a war would present many inducements to her and would certainly be very popular.

After all, Austria-Hungary did not declare war on Russia till yesterday. This delay is remarkable, considering the flash-light performance of the Berlin Kaiser. What an effort it must have cost the aged Franz Josef to consent to this declaration of war! I am firmly convinced he was duped or forced into it—or, at all events, not fully informed in time. In the end, no doubt, he will have allowed himself to be persuaded to take action against Serbia, but beyond question not till he had been assured that no further military complications could possibly arise. Now he is committed to the war with France and England as well; and perhaps he will die with the whole world still blazing round him. He will believe it was his Imperial Ally whose impetuous action unloosed the fiends of hell, and that he himself

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is but giving the help he had guaranteed : whereas in fact the Kaiser at Berlin was impelled or trapped into action by persons who belonged to the Court at Vienna. Even now, it would seem, Franz Josef's enemies regard him as a knightly figure, a personality to excite their sympathy. No mud is thrown at him as it was at our Kaiser ; for Franz Josef in person uttered no threats, shouted no abuse, gave no provocation. The proclamations he addressed to the peoples of his Empire appealed to them indeed in fiery language, but without one spiteful or offensive phrase.

Our authorities are making more and more energetic attempts to check the mischief they themselves provoked, i.e. to stop the public hunt after motor-cars laden with gold and after spies—a craze that endangers everybody's life. Many Prussian officers were shot whilst driving in their cars. The official injunction now is : “ Precaution, not spy-mania ! ”

August 8th.

The news arrived yesterday that Liège has been taken by storm. Von Emmich, the commander-in-chief of the army, is said to have led the assault in person. None of us would have believed that so strong a fortress could have been rushed at the first attempt by troops who had

The German Navy

barely had time to arrive. I was almost tempted to give way to an instinctive feeling of pride at this achievement. But the thought of the horrible crime and ghastly sacrifices forbids all feelings of the kind.

To-day we hear of a bold stroke by our sailors. A little unarmed steamer, whilst laying mines at the mouth of the Thames, was fired upon and, on refusing to surrender, sent to the bottom: at the same time, however, an English cruiser was sunk by one of the mines. There is a rumour current that the German Navy intends to bring on a big naval battle with all speed. Even should this involve the annihilation of the German fleet, most of the English fleet would after all be destroyed likewise. In my opinion, the German Fleet ought to keep quiet in the meantime and wait upon the course of events on the Continent. The English can do nothing against the German coast in the North Sea and they will not come into the Baltic.

It is now possible to form a fairly complete picture of the acts of violence committed in the various countries against persons of enemy nationality on the outbreak of war. The papers are full of descriptions of such scenes, and one will never be able to forget them. I will not dwell on what happened in Belgium, particularly at Antwerp and Brussels, where German shops were

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plundered or demolished and the Germans were dragged out of their houses, ejected from the hospitals, murdered in the streets, and driven in thousands in the most barbarous manner across the frontier into Holland. For feeling in Belgium was so bitter that one can almost understand why for some days even the police were unable or unwilling to protect the Germans. But it is a grave outrage to European civilisation that in France, too, many thousand Germans were treated with but little less brutality—innocent and harmless folk, caught unawares by the outbreak of war and only too anxious to withdraw their hated persons with all possible speed from the eyes of the French. Less passion was shown in England; but the English arrested a very large number of Germans as spies, and it is to be feared that, under martial law and in the prejudiced state of public opinion, most of these unfortunates, hitherto the grateful recipients of England's hospitality, will be brought to the gallows. Spymania, it seems to me, is a terrible form of madness, and the Governments do nothing to extinguish it, though it is almost as baseless as the belief in witchcraft; at any rate, there would hardly be a single genuine spy amongst ten thousand foreigners who have settled in a country with the intention of living there—unless, indeed, one is determined to play tricks with language and to

Treatment of Aliens

pervert its natural meaning. The genuine spy is undoubtedly drawn from quite a different class of people. Up to the present but little news has come through from Russia, but there too, as in France, innumerable peaceable Germans are said to have been thrown into prison, to have been herded together in remote districts, and to have been compelled to undertake forced labour for a livelihood.

In this matter, it seems to me that the German population has behaved far the most decently, except where the authorities issued special instructions, as e.g. in regard to the hunting down of spies. The Germans neither beat nor insulted any of the English, Russian or French people who wished to leave the country. Foreigners liable to military service were detained—after the enemy countries had set the example—but they were given good quarters and well looked after. Nowhere, so far as I have been able to discover, was there any organised, or even any casual, persecution of foreigners simply because they were of enemy nationality. Such excesses as occurred were directed against supposed spies, and their victims were almost always Germans. No hatred was manifested anywhere against any foreigner as such. I am certain, of my own personal knowledge, that nobody did any harm to the many foreigners settled in my town: on the

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contrary, everybody was ready to help them to get safely, comfortably and without hindrance across the frontier. One of the Englishmen there—a man who had just turned 30—was taken into custody, but not till after it became known that the Germans were being arrested in England. Moreover, the other Englishmen in the town had already been provided with safe-conducts and conveyances. Friendly advice was given to a young French engineer, who was employed on the Northern Railway, to leave the country; and people helped him to go, without caring whether he was liable to military service or not. There are many other instances I could quote.

It was much more in accordance with the German national character to molest the representatives of foreign countries, who were thought to be politically responsible, than to annoy private persons who were as innocent of what was happening as the great majority of the Germans themselves. And in fact excesses were committed in Berlin in two instances. When the Russian ambassador and his staff were about to drive to the station in open motor-cars, some of his people (it is alleged) behaved in a very unceremonious fashion in sight of the assembled crowd. The Berlin public fell upon them and belaboured them with sticks and umbrellas. The mob also broke some windows at the English Embassy when

German Military Communiqués

England's declaration of war became known ; but the Chief Commissioner of Police soon appeared on the scene, and the popular excitement quickly calmed down. Regrettable as such lapses are, they are after all not to be compared with the incidents in St. Petersburg, where the German Embassy was wrecked and an old official, who had been left behind as a watchman, was torn to pieces ; or with those in Paris, where the German Ambassador was threatened not only in the streets, but in his own home.

August 9th.

The General Staff has aroused fresh jubilation by announcing, " Liège is firmly in our hands." This is interpreted as a denial of the foreign reports that we are not yet in possession of the forts. I hear, however, from a reliable source that some of the forts are still holding out. It would seem advisable, therefore, to receive our official military *communiqués* with a certain reserve. They must be interpreted in a very strict and literal sense if they are to retain any claim to truth.

Germany and Austria-Hungary are issuing a joint proclamation, promising " liberation from the Muscovite yoke " to the Poles. Were Prussia at war with Austria, no doubt she would once more invoke the assistance of " the inhabitants of the glorious Kingdom of Bohemia " by a similar

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promise. The foulness of the design is enough to defile the fair word "liberation." And we Germans have no right to speak of "the Muscovite yoke." For we bear a yoke ourselves, a yoke more splendid than that of the Poles, but all the harsher; and, besides, we have subjected the Poles to a treatment of systematic infamy worse than ever they suffered from the Russians. As to the Alsatians and the Danes, we continue to torture them to death; but our Poles are allowed to breathe the open air for a space, their prison fare is improved for a time, so that they may proclaim the magnificent generosity of Prussia to their brothers languishing in Russia and encourage them to overpower their Russian jailor. For, be it well understood, nobody in Prussia dreams of giving anything to the Poles at Prussia's expense. The frontiers of Prussia are to remain as rigid as the hard-hearted, ignoble political system of that country. Our design is simply to incite the Poles to rise against the Czar, just because we happen to be at war with him; to rob him of a people whose country we formerly stole and partitioned with his help. Prussia's object is to make the fight easier for herself; she feels not a trace of love or respect for the bodies or the souls of the unfortunate Polish people. It has always been my firm conviction that, although three Emperors sat upon Poland's

The Polish Question

coffin, the subjugation of the Poles would never succeed, because they made so vigorous a defence ; and I am therefore filled with bitterness to see what inducements are needed to convert Prussia into a friend of the Russian Poles. Only yesterday I happened to converse with the man who had formerly worked out our precious policy of expropriating the Prussian Poles, and he insisted that Russian Poland must not be allowed to become an independent kingdom either, except on condition of its taking over the entire Polish population of Prussia and agreeing to a rectification of its frontier in Prussia's favour. The larger landowners were to be expropriated, their property being given to German settlers taken over from Russia. As to the peasants, one could not, of course, expropriate whole villages at a time ; but agreements must be made with Russian Poland so as to secure that the Prussian Poles would gradually be transferred to that country. Absurd as this idea may be, it is nevertheless within my knowledge that the plan is being vigorously debated and approved by many influential persons at the present time.

August 11th.

To-day the Quartermaster-General announces to an attentive Germany that the supreme military authorities will tell the public everything, without

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concealment or extenuation ; silence will be maintained only as long as strategic reasons require it.

Having thus adopted the right defensive attitude, the Great General Staff proceeds to inform us to-day that some of the forts round Liège are still holding out. Most of us, it is true, had already learnt as much from some source or other ; still, it is a relief to find official announcement and private information now in agreement.

According to our papers, England has seized for its own purposes completed and nearly-completed ships which were lying in English private yards for Turkey's account. Semi-official articles call this an outrageous breach of international law on England's part, Turkey being a neutral country. They call upon the Turks to expel all English subjects from Turkey. The whole world is summoned to bear witness to this shameful act of treachery to Turkey, this revelation of the contemptible baseness of the English, both as a nation and as individuals. All States are advised to have no dealings with England in the future.

The best comment I can offer on such language is to state the following fact : On the very first day of the war the War Office and the Admiralty in Berlin began to seize the entire stock of materials which was being used in Germany for gun-making and ship-building on account of foreign States,

Stirring up Popular Hatred

and they did so without coming to any arrangement with the countries in question, viz. the Argentine Republic, Norway, Brazil, Chile, Switzerland, Roumania, Greece and Bulgaria. It was left to the German private firms (whom the authorities of course promised to indemnify) to arrange matters with the Governments concerned. Germany, therefore, is abusing England like a pickpocket for a proceeding which she herself has always regarded as a necessary measure of war. A worse instance of stirring up popular hatred can hardly be conceived. Moreover, Germany is anything but the guardian of Turkey, who—particularly during the last few years—has selected quite different sponsors.

August 12th.

At the demand of England and France, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors are being recalled from London and Paris. The French and English Ambassadors are leaving Vienna, having declared war on Austria-Hungary in the name of their Governments. Not till now! Assuredly, the old Emperor himself never believed that the step taken against Serbia would lead him so far.

For the first time since the outbreak of war the newspapers are publishing fairly detailed reports from foreign sources, e.g. telegrams from Paris

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which have reached Germany by a roundabout neutral route. Hitherto this indirect method has hardly worked at all : we have had to rely upon a few laconic reports from Wolff's Bureau for our foreign news. It is to be hoped we shall now continue to have prompt access to the foreign Press, even if only through the extracts given in our more important newspapers, for it is necessary to compare home and foreign reports if one is to get nearer to the truth. It is, for example, hardly possible to conceive anything more conflicting than the present German and French accounts of the military operations in Alsatia. The French announce their entry into Altheim and Mülhausen, the Germans declare the French were unable to maintain themselves at any point across the frontier.

Even during the war of 1870-1871 the German female population is said to have been too friendly to the French prisoners—to have taken particular pleasure in nursing, comforting and commiserating them, whilst the German wounded excited far less interest in the women of Germany, and often had to be content with bread and water. Old people, who took part in that war, are now reminding the public with some bitterness of this experience, and several German papers have seized the opportunity to warn German women and girls, in the

German Women Censured

most emphatic terms, not to give way to this propensity again. The warnings, however, do not appear to have produced any effect; at least, remonstrances are already being addressed to the women of Düsseldorf because, when the first convoy of Belgian prisoners was passing through, they addressed the Belgians in French and gave them dainties. In calling for the intervention of the railway police, the papers use such rough language about "Germania's chaste daughters" (who, as a rule, are so eulogised), that I cannot refrain from satirical reflections on Teutonic chivalry, and can well understand the romantic attraction the ladies feel for those cattle-trucks that, for once in a way, contain none of their flaxen-haired countrymen gazing upon them with sea-blue eyes and pining for a refreshing drink.

August 13th.

After all, it was officially announced last night that in consequence of the battles at Mülhausen and Lagarde not a single French soldier remains on German soil. The papers add that the French proclamations were dropped into Mülhausen by aeroplanes—in other words, not brought across the frontier by actual invaders at all. In these circumstances I do not know what to think of the very different account given by the French. Joffre's report to Poincaré announcing his first

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successes and the profound emotion produced by the rejoicings of the Alsatians, Joffre's manifesto to the people of Alsatia, the telegram of congratulations from the French Minister for War, etc. : the solemnity and pathos of this demeanour of the French had led me to suppose that they had established themselves in Alsatia in a much more serious fashion.

To-day everybody is full of the exploits of the big cruiser *Goeben* and the *Breslau*. After bombarding the Algerian ports, the two ships went to Messina to coal, and succeeded in escaping for the second time from the English men-of-war that were lying in wait for them. Until accurate information comes to hand, one can form no idea how such an escape could be effected. It is probably not now possible for them to get to Pola ; the Austrian fleet itself must have been locked up there long ago. Perhaps they are making for Constantinople ? For it looks as if Turkey were about to declare war on Russia.

August 14th.

A few days ago the English seized the German colony of Togo : further achievements in the colonial field are sure to follow, though the " white man's war " is perhaps still more disgraceful in the effects it produces there than it is at home.

- Liège

Perhaps the Japanese will take a hand in the Pacific too, helping to deprive us of Kiau-Chau, etc. After all, none of these losses counts for anything in the issues now at stake, and in any case they are inevitable.

A gentleman who has just arrived from Liège informs me we took the last forts of that town yesterday. The 42-cm. mounted guns, which were entrained for Liège on August 10th (the two guns required 110 train-axles to carry them), battered down these stubborn forts in $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, he tells me. It is really not calculated to arouse one's confidence in the official German *communiqués* that the fall of Liège should have been announced a week ago, without any admission that some important forts had not yet been taken.

One hears rumours that English troops are landing at Calais. This seems to me more likely than a landing at Antwerp. In my opinion, the great battles of the war will not be fought in Belgium, though we shall undoubtedly have to keep strong forces there to protect ourselves against the resentment of the Belgians. It is no good, however, forming conjectures on these matters, though I am always being tempted to do so, because the trick we played on Belgium seems to me so unspeakably mean and loathsome that I

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should like to see its uselessness proved as soon as possible. Of one thing at least I am convinced : in consequence of the Belgian business, filth—more filth even than blood—will stain any laurels the German troops may win in this war. Before the news of our invasion of Belgium arrived, I was carried away by the popular excitement at least so far as to consider whether I should not disregard my personal opinions altogether and volunteer to share the lot of our common soldiers, thus simply yielding to my natural impulse to be with and amongst the men who have to fight and suffer. But the opening move in Belgium nipped this feeling in the bud. I would not join the army now, not even under compulsion. What is the good of convictions if I am not to remain true to them, not to stand up for them ?

Universal conscription is in truth a crime. Greatly as I loathe war between European nations, its horrors and the harm it does would be infinitely less if it were fought by armies of volunteers. Nowadays, at all events, there would be far less danger of war if there were nothing but mercenaries and citizens freely defending their country. The progress of thought, which has made it possible in modern times for enormous masses of conscripts to be hurled against one another, has brought us more loss than gain. There are various possible

Abolition of Tariffs

ways of fighting: war is the most unworthy of all, because military victory is no proof that right was on the victor's side. If, however, a compromise is to be made, since undoubtedly there are still people who wish to be soldiers, the best arrangement would be to allow everyone to choose the kind of fighting he prefers. It is a fatal position for any ruler, even if he champion the noblest ideals, that he should not feel his cause adequately supported by warriors who flock voluntarily to his standard—that he should have no confidence in a fortunate issue unless he be able to compel his fellow-men to shed blood. Should it be one of the results of this war to make an end of universal liability to military service, of conscription, one would have to bless the day it broke out, even if Europe were devastated.

There is, indeed, another method to be borne in mind by anybody who is considering how peace and concord might be restored to Europe. This method is the removal of the barriers erected by tariffs. These barriers cause division where there would be a natural desire for union, and in every country they create a small class of persons who have been artificially enriched, together with a number of malcontents anxious to achieve by war what they have been prevented, principally by tariffs, from achieving in peace.

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Once let those barriers be removed, and the consequent disturbance to the lucrativeness of certain branches of manufacture will soon be overcome, for adaptation will be quickly effected and every country will find new industries to take the place of those it has lost. The important point is that all countries should abolish their tariffs, and that no State should stand out. With the abolition of the tariff-barriers, the fraternisation of Europe—the United States of Europe—will begin, the nations will start on the upward path, truth and mutual confidence will emerge. Free Trade guarantees the uninterrupted progress of civilisation.

August 15th.

Now at last I have learnt the truth about Liège. Our success is less important than even I in my scepticism had believed. Yesterday's *communiqué* still contained some exaggeration. The following is what I am told by someone whom the Minister for War commissioned to inspect the conquered forts and to make preparations for their restoration. He says that he was unable to carry out his instructions, because on the day of his arrival at Liège, viz. August 12th, only a single fort was in the hands of the Germans, the remaining forts not having yet surrendered. It seems, therefore, that even the Minister for

More about Liège

War interpreted the news of the fall of Liège in the same way as the rest of us, viz. that at least most of the forts had fallen. In point of fact, however, the troops succeeded in overcoming one fort only, and so got into the town which they occupied without being able to make any further progress. In the presence of the eye-witness I have quoted, a second fort was bombarded by 21-cm. howitzers and surrendered; a third fort likewise surrendered, the two 42-cm. guns having been brought into action for the first time against it. The speedy fall of the remaining forts is now expected, but by the morning of August 14th—the day my witness, who had been with the 42-cm. guns, started on his return journey—only three forts were in our possession. This being so, I must say that the official announcement of the conquest of Liège, together with the violent denials of all assertions to the contrary, strikes me as a fraud. There was no justification for the tremendous exultation over our unprecedented achievement—our deed without a parallel in the history of the world. Liège is not a fortress of the first rank; the town itself is unfortified; the twelve widely-separated forts were garrisoned by gunners only, not by infantry; moreover, the Belgians had not been able to construct any lines of defence between the forts. Thus, in forcing our way into Liège, we did not perform

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such a tremendous feat of heroism; and there is nothing heroic at all in our capture of the forts. As my informant himself saw, the two big German guns bombarded the third fort from a distance of over 8,000 metres*; the fort itself did not fire, and the bombardment proceeded exactly like artillery practice on a range in peace-time. The guns, he said, were surrounded by a whole swarm of officers who wanted to watch. As for the posts of observation, it had proved possible to push them close up to the hostile forts, where they were clearly visible from a great distance, without being themselves exposed to fire from any quarter. After about forty-five shells had been fired, the fort in question hoisted white flags and the garrison—perhaps 350 men in all—surrendered, without having suffered any losses. The garrison had been paralysed simply by the moral effect of the heavy shells and the gases they generated. Great rents were to be seen in the concrete structure of the fort, but its guns had remained intact.

According to my informant, most of the German losses up to the present have been caused by the Belgian population. His own motor-car, he said, was fired at several times during his drive to Liège. His statements, which are based on descriptions given to him by officers with

* About five miles.—*Translator.*

The Belgian Population

the troops, would lead one to picture the course of events more or less as follows :—

At first the Belgian population put no difficulties in the way of the German advance. But when the Belgian Government's protest and its appeal for England's help became known, the whole country was seized with terrible excitement, which was aggravated by the fact that there were no Belgian troops to resist the invasion till Liège was reached, and even there everything was in confusion. By this time small detachments of men had been formed in the villages through which we were passing, and they proceeded to defend themselves by firing on our soldiers from the houses and from behind barricades. It is also quite possible that the firing was started by persons who were to have served in the Belgian army, or who belonged to the Civic Guard, but had not yet left for service—by persons wearing uniforms and in regular formation. Perhaps, even, a regular force had already been organised for the defence of the country, and it fired from the houses before they had been evacuated by the population. However that may be, as our troops passed through, they were suddenly fired upon from many quarters, the shots coming from houses and hiding-places. A number

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of German officers and men fell in this way. Thereupon our soldiers fired into the houses, took them by storm, swept whole streets with their fire—the effect being that innumerable innocent persons, including women and children, were killed. Entire villages were destroyed. Herve, e.g., a little town of 5,000 inhabitants, is a mere heap of ruins; not a living thing is left in it, not a house remains intact, all the household furniture is lying in the streets; in short, it is a scene of incredible devastation. Since, moreover, wounded German soldiers were cruelly maltreated and murdered, not even the Red Cross flags being respected, the German troops proceeded with continually increasing severity against guilty and suspected persons, no matter what their age or sex.

I will add one or two cases, drawn from my informant's own experience. In a certain village, shots had been fired from the houses on a body of troops passing through. German soldiers force their way in from every side and open a murderous fire. When things are calming down, my informant accompanies an officer into the village, and sees some soldiers dragging four men and three women out of a house. According to the soldiers, another shot has just been fired from this house—the seven prisoners must be killed.

Terrorising in Belgium

The officer says, "Perhaps some of them are innocent. You had better first take them before your superior officers, so that they can be questioned in their own language." When, a quarter of an hour later, my informant and the officer returned through the same street, they saw the four men and three women lying dead before the house, and a large number of screaming children throwing themselves in utter distraction on the corpses.

No wonder that on the approach of German soldiers whole groups of the inhabitants fall on their knees, hold up their hands to show they have no weapons, and pray piteously for mercy, as my informant likewise told me.

When, in my informant's presence, the 42-cm. guns had taken up their position in front of Liège, an old man was observed wearing a Red Cross badge and seated near the guns. He was seized, and called upon to produce his papers. All the old man had on him, however, was a printed card to the effect that its possessor belonged to the Belgian Red Cross. As this was inadequate, preparations were made for dealing more severely with him. The poor old fellow knelt down and made ready to die, only begging that a small parcel (which he pulled out of his pocket) might be forwarded to his wife at such and such an address. My informant pitied the feeble old man,

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and put in a good word for him. Thereupon two soldiers were ordered to take him out of the way and then let him go. He might consider himself fortunate that even this much trouble was taken on his account.

Enough on this subject! I am overwhelmed when I think of the horrible sufferings of this peaceable people, who only a few days ago, as a German report told us, welcomed the first German refugees from France, on their reaching the Belgian frontier, with the words "*Salut, messieurs, bonjour, mesdames, vous êtes sauvés, vous êtes en Belgique.*"*

August 16th.

News from Berlin, told to us by a gentleman who, the day before, had been in consultation with the Secretary of State of the Imperial Admiralty, with the Foreign Secretary, and also with the leading military authorities. Everybody, he says, is in the best of spirits, full of the most cheerful confidence in victory. In a few days the German armies are to crush the whole of France like a steam-roller; everything has gone like clockwork, and will continue to go without a hitch. To-morrow the Kaiser joins Headquarters, but the Great General Staff is almost

* "Welcome, gentlemen; good day, ladies! You are safe, you are in Belgium."

The German and English Fleets

inclined to remain in Berlin, since it can work more quietly and comfortably there than in any foreign place. The telephone connections are working splendidly; the General Staff is in telephonic communication with almost every battalion and is able to survey the whole field with marvellous completeness, knowing exactly where all the fighting units, even the smallest, are stationed and how they are situated. There is no doubt that, of all our opponents, it is France that will have to pay the bill. As to England, the whole situation is very extraordinary. The German Fleet has hunted for the English Fleet all the way up to Scotland in vain—it is nowhere to be found. Our Battle Fleet has now come back again, as it would not do for it to have its base of operations at too great a distance from home. Our submarine flotilla actually sailed right round Scotland with the loss of only one submarine (U 15). It is supposed that England desires to avoid a battle, so as not to weaken her command of the sea and also, perhaps, because large classes in England do not like the war. England will, no doubt, take care that France alone shall bleed. Sir Edward Grey gave most hearty expression to his regret in a farewell interview with our Ambassador, Lichnowsky—an interview to which the latter was stupid enough to commit himself, though diplomatic relations had already been broken off ;

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and Grey's language, it is thought, should be interpreted as evidence that England was still hopeful of avoiding the clash of arms with Germany. In any case, the French belief that considerable English forces will be landed on the Continent within a reasonable time is nothing but a beautiful dream.

"Russia's behaviour," my informant continued, "is almost as strange as that of England. Russia too seems inclined to leave France to her fate. No sign anywhere of the beginning of an offensive. The Russian troops, with the exception of a small force of cavalry, have been withdrawn at all points to a distance of 150 kilometres from the frontier. The Russian soldiers have devastated the whole of the intervening Russian territory, burning everything there, including the crops. The Russians are under a delusion if they imagine we shall pursue them into the interior. We have no need to do that. We could annihilate Russia without fighting any battles, simply by stirring up insurrection and thus tearing all her border provinces from her. Independence for Finland and the Baltic provinces and towns—Russian Poland once more a kingdom—Bessarabia to be given to the Roumanians—the Russian Caucasus, Armenia and Persia to the Turks." He told us further that the arrangements between Roumania, Bulgaria and Turkey were getting on splendidly, and that the

Kiau-Chau

formal accession of these three countries to the Triple Alliance would take place in a few days. Before that, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* would make their appearance in the Black Sea, would destroy the Russian fleet and bombard the harbours and towns, thus proving to the three States in question that they had nothing to fear from Russia.

It was only at Kiau-Chau that the prospect was bad. There were many indications that the Japanese were going to take it. In that event, it was, of course, lost for a long time, until the day should come for Germany to square accounts with the Japanese too.

And now as to Belgium. Here too everything was proceeding according to programme. Liège would never be given back; we were already making ourselves quite at home there. Namur was not interfering in the least with the operations we had planned. In a few days we should advance along the whole line, and then the true purpose of everything that had happened would be manifest.

England appeared to be trying to persuade Rome to intervene. It was to be hoped Italy would not prove so naïve as to take upon herself this crown of thorns, but would abide strictly by her neutrality. That was all we demanded of her.

A rosy picture !

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August 18th.

The preliminary evolutions of our troops are said to be completed. Hardly a breath stirs the leaves of our newspapers: all are waiting for the storm to burst. There will be an uninterrupted struggle for many days, before it will be possible—under present circumstances, when whole armies are engaged—to speak of a real defeat. Foreign papers report German reverses in Belgium. As these reports come from Dutch sources, there will be this amount of truth in them, that the advance of the German troops is not very easy and entails considerable losses owing to the stout defence made by the Belgians. It is alleged that the German advance on Brussels has been finally thwarted. I had taken it for granted that the Germans had no intention of going there at all.

There is something almost comic in a little incident which our authorities report as having occurred in the neighbourhood of Strasbourg. A Strasbourg regiment of foot artillery lost all its guns in the country near Schirmeck, and—to quote the words of the report—“returned to Strasbourg uninjured, having lost its guns but not its courage.” The incident, the report adds, is a warning against excessive rashness or imprudence. I venture to draw the inference that, after all, there are still some French soldiers on German soil, Schirmeck being said to lie not so far from Strasbourg.

“Self-Righteous Barbarians”

To-day's official report informs us that the Liège forts were only taken gradually, one by one. It gives no exact dates, however, but leads one to suppose the forts had all been taken long ago. At the same time the Press publishes a *communiqué* from the Belgian Government, dated August 10th, according to which the “enemy has taken Liège, but the forts are still intact, the enemy having forced his way through between them.” Commenting on this truthful announcement, the papers abuse the Belgian Government in the grossest terms for its impudent lie. One would like simply to disregard these self-righteous barbarians and their abuse; after all, they themselves are the dupes, because they have not yet learnt to read their own Government's reports in a critical spirit. In order, however, to exclude all possibility of doubt with reference to the forts, I will quote from a private letter of August 14th that was shown to me yesterday: the writer is von Einem, formerly Minister for War. He says he is in front of Liège and has the chief command over the 42-cm. guns; that the latter arrived before Liège on the evening of the 12th and have done wonderfully good work since; that five forts have already fallen; that he had kept things quiet, delaying all assaults against the forts until these heavy guns arrived; before their arrival, one fort, and one only, had surrendered through the weakness of its

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commandant, and the gap thus produced had enabled us to get into Liège and establish ourselves there.

One sees at once from this letter that the Belgian announcement of August 10th is accurate, whilst the German *communiqués* were misleading. If, therefore, Berlin announces to-day—in unambiguous terms, but without specifying the dates—that all the forts are in our hands, we may be quite sure that to-day is the earliest date on which the last forts can have fallen ; and what is more, that their fall was solely caused by bombardment with the heaviest artillery.

Nor were the French lying when they reported their march into Alsatia and the exultation of the inhabitants. On the contrary, it is we who were the liars. This time the truth came out in the following manner. Hitherto there has been a suspicious warmth in the praise officially bestowed on the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine for their true German sentiments and behaviour ; hitherto, also, their active enthusiasm has been trumpeted abroad to the whole world. Now, however, the military and civil authorities in Alsace and Lorraine are issuing proclamations in a very different tone. From these it appears that the native population has repeatedly committed most hostile acts against the German soldiers and has made common cause with the French troops. The proclamations

The French in Alsace

threaten that every village where non-combatants have fired at a German soldier will be razed to the ground ; and, further, that its mayor will be shot. Moreover, they state that even now French soldiers are being hidden in Mülhausen, that the penalty for this crime is death, that the owner of the house will be shot too, etc. This evidence is amply sufficient by itself to prove that the French did in fact receive a warm welcome in Alsatia, and that it was not only French aeroplanes which reached Mülhausen. But the letter of a Catholic army chaplain, writing from Mülhausen, is still more instructive. No doubt the Press has been allowed to publish this letter now, because the authorities in the "Imperial Provinces" desire to drop the mask. The chaplain says that the French march into Mülhausen was a triumphal procession. "Even before Mülhausen was reached, the villagers strewed flowers in their path and welcomed them as their liberators with tears of joy. Countless numbers of soldiers marched into Mülhausen itself ; all of them had bunches of flowers on their bayonets, were overwhelmed with acts of courtesy and greeted with passionate expressions of welcome. The people wrecked the barracks at Mülhausen and set them on fire. Later on the German troops re-occupied the town, and the inhabitants treat them with silent, deadly hostility."

To sum up the whole matter : The Germans

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circulate lies or truth to suit their momentary purpose.

August 19th.

Delbrück, the Minister of State, has taken the sensible step of issuing a public summons to all eyewitnesses of the Belgian cruelties committed against Germans formerly resident in Belgium. They are invited to come before a court and give evidence, so that a complete and truthful account of the events in question may be obtained.

Bernard Shaw declares in a newspaper article that the spirit of Potsdam must be exorcised, in order that it may again be possible to love the Germany of Goethe and Beethoven. Nobody, he says, can love Bismarck's Germany, with her mailed fist and her convulsions of ambition. For the sake of justice, England is forced to-day, with a heavy heart, to restrain the Germans from destroying other countries. Once this has been attained, once Germany has been brought back to reason and good behaviour, England will be equally ready to stand up for Germany, if ever she be threatened with danger from Russia.

That, in my opinion, is what all sincere and enlightened foreigners think. It is a lie to assert that their one desire was the weakening and dismemberment of Germany, so that they might be

Japan and Germany

able to despise her, as they had done in former times.

Reports keep coming in more and more that Japan is preparing to capture Kiau-Chau. They have learnt a great deal in the school of European diplomacy, and will utilise the present and every future disagreement in Europe to look after their own interests without scruple wherever the opportunity presents itself.

That reminds me of the undignified scene enacted in Berlin directly war broke out. Some blockhead or other had spread the report that Japan would seize the opportunity of Russia's embarrassment for an advance in Manchuria. If Japan had taken any such step, it would have been solely from selfish motives and not from any regard for Germany ; nevertheless, an enormous crowd of enthusiastic jingoes gathered in front of the Japanese Embassy and cheered for hours on end—until at last a councillor of legation appeared on the balcony to explain that he could neither deny nor confirm the rumours about Japan's attitude to Russia, as he had no instructions. The crowd had to disperse in search of other opportunities for shouting "Hurrah !" Still, it had succeeded in displaying to the Japanese Embassy the political immaturity and lack of dignity in a Berlin crowd.

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The letters from soldiers at the front, which our papers publish without exercising any criticism, have become a regular plague in their effect on public opinion. The papers keep on begging for more of such letters from the front, as though they were unaware of the mischief they cause. Boastful, excited, ignorant soldiers write, of course, the most absurd stuff, no matter whether their subject be conquests or cruelties. They confuse, in a reckless manner, their own experiences with current rumours and also, more especially, with what they too have merely read in the papers. No further harm would be done if the letters were kept for the edification of the men's families and friends. But serious mischief results when the papers make a practice of publishing them—often, too, in spaced type—as though their authors were reliable reporters, writing with a sense of responsibility. Thus the public could read in many such letters how the Liège forts were one and all destroyed, having been heroically taken by storm as soon as the town was occupied. Editorial comments are then added, abusing our lying opponent for having denied that the forts fell at once. No official steps are taken to bring the truth to light and to clear the enemy's honour. Hence I cannot refrain from adducing one more piece of evidence, utterly superfluous though it be. Here is the report sent in by an officer belonging to the battery of 42-cm. guns :—

Stories by German Fugitives

“Liège, August 16th.—During the four days in which the battery has been in action against the forts of Liège . . . it has completely destroyed its targets. Fort de Pontille was forced to hoist the white flag after forty-three shots. Yesterday nineteen shots converted Fort de Loucin into a heap of ruins. . . . To-morrow we are to move on to attack Namur, the last of the Liège forts having fallen *to-day*.”

As worthless as soldiers' letters, from the point of view of evidence, are many of the stories told by distracted German fugitives—e.g. that they had seen French troops at Erquelinnes, i.e. in Belgium, as early as August 1st. Presumably these poor people were utterly unable to distinguish between Belgian and French soldiers; nevertheless, their assertions are served up to the German public as proof that France was the first to violate the neutrality of Belgium. The invariably anonymous style of these stories is particularly suspicious: “A gentleman who crossed the Franco-Belgian frontier during the night between July 31st and August 1st, etc.”

Any ignorant herd is liable to outbursts of panic; and the larger the herd, the more frequent and terrible those outbursts tend to be. This perhaps explains the extraordinary degree in which the people of the great German Empire allow

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themselves to be carried off their feet by baseless rumours. When the first *communiqué* appeared attributing the opening of hostilities to France—viz. the report about the bombs dropped by aviators at Nuremberg—I characterised it as incredible, although the Imperial Chancellor actually quoted the incident in the Reichstag. Now I see that the French Premier, at a meeting of the French Chamber at the beginning of the war, solemnly declared that this assertion was false. One would suppose it an easy matter to ascertain the truth in a case like this; but the people of Nuremberg appear to believe in the bombs, although they themselves perceived not the least trace of them. What the authorities assert is to the German more important than the result of his own investigations. He lets himself be talked into believing whatever the Government chooses to say. But when once a man, in submission to the authority of the State, has resigned his claim to form a judgment of his own, he loses the power of criticism; and this uncritical habit of mind will show itself even where the State's authority is no longer involved. Let me quote just one example out of many. The other day two persons, who had been sent to Wilhelmshaven to carry out certain instructions, came back with the tale that they had seen an English airship lying wrecked in the streets of that town. These were serious

Death of the Pope

persons, capable men in their profession, with a University education. The news was so interesting that attempts were made to learn further details by telephoning to the authorities at Wilhelms-haven. Yet it turned out that the whole story had no foundation whatever.

August 20th.

Pope Pius X died to-day. His death is symbolical of the collapse of his Church, its teaching and its morality, in the present war. Europe has put out its lights; the clash of swords, curses and groans fill the darkness. Who will bring the new light?

August 21st.

Yesterday a Japanese ultimatum demanded the unconditional surrender of Kiau-Chau. The Germans marched into Brussels. Besides these two weighty pieces of intelligence, there is the news of a big German victory in Lorraine on a battlefield greater than that of the whole army in 1870. The French are retreating along the whole line and being pursued. Many thousand prisoners, great quantities of guns and ammunition captured. Consequences of the battle quite incalculable. The poor French! Everyone in Germany is convinced that they will pay the bill and that nobody will give them any real help. Our Government claims

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to have made frequent public predictions to that effect in Paris. President Wilson has already offered his mediation—somewhat early. France immediately acknowledged the receipt of the offer, declining it with thanks and blaming Germany.

To-day, moreover, there was also published a telegraphic correspondence between Wilhelm II and the King of England. From this it appears that the idea of the French remaining neutral was taken up by Sir Edward Grey on August 1st. On the same day the German Government agreed not to attack France (in the event of a war between Germany and Russia) if England would guarantee France's neutrality. It can hardly be supposed that France would have decided upon neutrality, even if Germany's warlike measures had not made it too late for further negotiations. Still, the telegraphic correspondence leaves one with the impression that a delay of twenty-four or forty-eight hours in the German mobilisation might conceivably have given an entirely different turn to events.

As regards the Japanese, I do not really suppose that England was the magician who summoned these spirits: what I believe is that she could not hold them in check. Will the Chinese now proceed to fight the Japanese because they

Japan and China

wish to possess Kiau-Chau themselves? Will the United States succeed in forcing Japan to hand over the German Protectorate to China? The Japanese will in the end dominate China. All the Asiatic possessions of Europe will then be directly menaced. The blow will fall principally on England and France.

August 22nd.

However important yesterday's battle may have been, it cannot be more than the first scene in the first act of a long tragedy. In all probability, as the war proceeds, our victories over France will recede further and further into the background, bringing us no profit; for the whole situation is constantly changing, and each new turn of the kaleidoscope will demand fresh exertions and fresh sacrifices, so that in the end victors and vanquished alike will sink into a common misery and barbarism—unless a strong hand and a strong head can arrest their fall in time.

The news is published to-day that the military authorities have taken control of John Cockerill's great Belgian steel-works at Seraing, near Liège. Hitherto this private firm had undertaken the manufacture of munitions as one branch of its operations: it will now be obliged to devote itself entirely to the provision of military requisites for the Germans. The managing directors of the

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works have been dismissed and put under arrest. The administration is being taken over by a Prussian colonel. I should like to hear the outcry that would be raised by the Germans if the French, while forcing their way into Germany, were to treat private firms in a similar fashion ! If in any matter we are the weaker party, we demand from our opponents a treatment such as we ourselves never grant when we are the stronger.

To be over-scrupulous is certainly not one of the failings of the leading men of modern Germany. They feel compunction only when in doubt as to their power. The people, however, are required to retain all their original goodness of nature and at the same time to prove an adaptable instrument for a policy of brutality. To-day there is to be a marvellous exhibition—the world is to be shown how the flock of sheep within the German fold can be transformed at will into a herd of elephants, trampling under foot every living thing beyond the fold. Many methods are employed to train the people for this performance. They are taught that political and private morality are, and must be, two entirely different spheres. Simultaneously an example of great piety is put before them. From the balcony of every palace, from the rooms of all the Ministers, from every General's camp, there has poured of late an unceasing stream of exhortations,

The German God

urging us to flock to the churches, to fall upon our knees, to invoke the God of Justice, the Champion of our cause, the Protector of poor persecuted and assaulted Germany—to sing praises to the German God, who will lead us victorious over the whole world, for He can find no better use for the garden of His Creation than that we should light our camp-fires therein. I hope there will be many who neither kneel nor pray, at least to such a God and for such an object. Far better to sit still and reflect, reserving our strength and faith, that to-day are manifested only in our bondage, for the coming of our emancipation. Nauseous hypocrisy and cunning, contempt for the people and fear such as criminals feel—these are the ingredients of that Government piety; and its aims are nothing but the sanctification of the Lie, the worship of Brutality, the deification of Wilhelm II.

Grand Duke Nicholas too, the Commander-in-chief of the Russian Army, has recently promised the Poles liberation and union with their brothers of Prussia and Galicia. Presumably under Russian suzerainty, our papers conjecture. What I think is that the Prussia and Russia of to-day are two equally-balanced opponents. The poor Poles had best be on their guard and trust neither Power. They owe them no gratitude for such “gifts of the

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Danai"—gifts that only great wariness will enable them to turn to any profit.

One of the smaller Westphalian papers, according to a recent announcement, has been suppressed, its further publication forbidden and its editor thrown into prison, on account of an article to the effect that Germany is bound to lose this war. These proceedings are universally approved. But this being so, we have no right to make such a fuss about our "closed ranks" or about the "unanimous enthusiasm inspiring the whole of our public opinion" to which the "papers of all political parties bear such impressive testimony." We are controlled by the strictest censorship. Only articles approved by the military authorities are allowed to appear. The provincial Press is ordered to take its news from the severely censored Berlin papers. Two editors of so chauvinistic a journal as the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* were arrested for having published without permission a few vague allusions to the movement of troops. If trifling faults are visited with such Draconian severity, it is easy to imagine what would now be the fate of the man who should venture to express himself with any real freedom. The Military Governor of Cologne has just forbidden the papers to enter into any sectarian discussions apropos of the death of Pope Pius X. "It would never do,"

Forced Unity

he says, "to disturb the glorious harmony now prevailing. Insubordination will be severely punished." So we are suddenly to be forced into unity of creed too—till such time as it may again please the authorities to set the different sects by the ears! Methods like these are indeed adapted to achieve wonderful concord in Germany for a considerable period.

I pointed out to a very highly placed personage how inconsistent it was to suppress every frame of mind except the "blood and glory" mood and at the same time to boast of our unanimity. "The fact is," he replied, "it is quite impossible in times like these to tolerate any free expression of opinion or any critical discussion in Germany. That all classes obey, that there is no kicking against the pricks, makes an excellent and a powerful impression. The means employed must be disregarded." In other words, he is powerfully impressed by the fact that nobody cares to risk freedom and life in a hopeless struggle against the authorities. It must not be forgotten that, the day before mobilisation began, a "state of war" was proclaimed over the whole of Germany; the entire country was put under martial law, many districts even under "strict" martial law. In such conditions, of course everybody knuckles under—all the more, because friends and acquaintances were torn asunder by the commencement of the war,

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and also because the hope of victory caused many people to waver in their allegiance to views once firmly held. But this unanimity is as artificial as one of Potemkin's villages ; and the first tribulation and the first defeats will scatter it to the winds, propped up though it be by martial law. At the present time people in Germany, impressed by our victorious advance, are triumphantly predicting that revolution will break out in Paris in from eight to fourteen days. They may be right, assuming the previous annihilation of the French army. The same thing, however, would happen in Germany if we lost the war ; indeed, it would happen in every one of the belligerent countries, with the possible exception of England.

Here is another characteristic, typical of those who set the fashion in Germany. They record with satisfaction every English utterance against the war, against the English Government, against the alliance with Russia or Japan ; every English criticism complaining of England's financial unpreparedness or of the effects that the war is producing on trade : in short, they welcome any and every sign of opposition in England. Yet not for a moment do they seem to realise what all this implies—viz. that in England even now everybody is still allowed to speak out freely, that nobody submits to have this right taken from him, and that this is a sign of England's greatness

German Tactlessness

and confidence. Still less does it occur to them that the people of their own country too should be allowed to speak their mind freely and to form an independent conviction as to the rightness of German policy.

August 23rd.

There has, after all, been talk since yesterday of strong Russian forces in East Prussia. It is announced to-day that the army of the Crown Prince of Prussia is advancing victoriously on both sides of Longwy, whilst the Crown Prince of Bavaria is holding a line between Lunéville and Blamont. From a private source I know that one of Namur's nine forts fell the day before yesterday, that four Austrian 30.5-cm. howitzers have also arrived at Namur, and that the place is far better prepared to defend itself than Liège was.

The German Government has broken off relations with Japan, without replying to the ultimatum. Our former Ambassador at Tokyo complained bitterly, in the presence of an acquaintance of mine, that our policy towards Japan had been most tactless for many years past. He said we had offended the Japanese again and again on quite trivial issues; and that on many definite occasions, when they offered to co-operate with us, we had actually repelled their advances.

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Since the outbreak of the war there is undoubtedly a general feeling, even in the public, that German diplomacy has proved a failure in every quarter of the globe. Many people say our diplomacy has failed because it was improvised from day to day, not controlled by any plan based on a wider outlook. I am of opinion that no better results were possible, in view of the Kaiser's character, his predominant authority, his vacillation and constant interference. No one could remain in our diplomatic service unless he danced to the Kaiser's tune, and everybody wished to remain; for very few men in Germany are prepared to sacrifice office and position for the sake of their convictions. What a man asks, is "How can I keep my post? How am I to get promotion?" Nobody asks, "What is it I am being required to do? Is it compatible with my personal convictions?" The Foreign Office always seemed to me a bureaucratic corporation, confused, fossilised and exclusive, deriving its directive impulse from without, and doing but little of its own initiative. Hence I am also of opinion that, so far as the present war is concerned, the Foreign Office is guilty at most because of its incompetence, not because it desired war. The present Chancellor has no real initiative whatever in foreign policy. The present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is a clever sceptic—

The German Foreign Office

occupying, as he himself believes, the wrong post. Besides, during the critical period before the war, he had been granted leave of absence and was on his honeymoon. Whilst he was away, it is true, the Under-Secretary of State (who up till then had not possessed much influence) seized the opportunity to insist upon the adoption of a firm political attitude. But the Under-Secretary was not himself one of the men whose decisions determined the policy of the Empire, though his action on this occasion accorded with their views.

The helplessness of the Foreign Office is shown by its failure to get into touch, and to keep in touch, with foreign Governments after the assassinations at Serajevo. Had the Kaiser and the men around him urged the Foreign Office to do so, that department would have responded with feverish energy. It is especially surprising that the German Government neglected to get into touch with Italy before it was too late. For some reason or other, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs actually believed—even quite a short time ago—that our relations with Italy had improved to such an extent during the last six months that the Italians would take the field with us without much hesitation or delay. He said, if I remember rightly, that he had discovered an entirely new basis for our policy in the Mediterranean, and had persuaded Italy to agree. To my mind, Italy's

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co-operation had always been inconceivable: I regarded our alliance with Italy as a mistake, if only because it would never stand the test. Public opinion in Italy is through and through hostile to Austria, and at least more friendly to France than to ourselves. But in Italy it is impossible for any Government to furnish military assistance to any Power against public opinion—impossible, even if the Italian Government desired to do so, which is not the case. And so in fact the whole Italian Press, representing all shades of opinion, is now declaring itself against us and demanding that Italy shall either remain neutral, or join the Entente, or exploit Austria's embarrassment. Now, at the eleventh hour, German diplomacy is bestirring itself: all kinds of emissaries are being sent out to win over the Italian Press and to make promises and representations to the Italian Government in the hope of attracting it to Germany's side. Attempts, too, are of course being made to entice the Italian politicians. We shall not succeed. But if we did succeed, Italy's support would be listless, ineffective, and dearly bought. In the meantime, according to well-founded reports, Italy and France have withdrawn their respective forces from the common frontier.

Much has been hoped from Turkey of late. But they are now saying in the Foreign Office that the situation is very doubtful. It is said

Attitude of Turkey

to be only a matter of hours before Turkey decides whether to join Germany or the Entente. The German warships at Constantinople are waiting to sally forth into the Black Sea. Several trains, with the necessary ammunition, mines, etc., and a complement of 500 men for the crews, are at this moment on their way to Constantinople. Ammunition for the *Goeben* was originally lying ready at Pola. A very considerable supply of artillery and ammunition, intended for the Turks themselves, is to be dispatched within the next few days if nothing occurs to stop it in the interval.

Great importance is attached to the speedy accession of Roumania, for she would be able to advance upon Kieff, the very heart of Russia. But Roumania's relations to Austria-Hungary have recently changed for the worse to a remarkable degree. The alliance was always more or less a secret affair between the two monarchs, and the present Government of Roumania is hardly likely to have anything to do with it. Nevertheless, until about a year ago, the two States regularly elaborated detailed plans for joint action in the event of either being involved in war with Russia. But ever since Austria-Hungary's opposition to the Peace of Bucharest, Roumania's last remnants of friendly feeling have pretty well evaporated. She rapidly began to make friends with France, Italy, Greece, and above all with

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Russia. The King, in spite of his personal influence which he always exerted in Germany's favour, was powerless against the rising tide flowing through all classes of the people and all political parties: he had already begun to swim with the current.

I have a fairly intimate knowledge of conditions in Roumania; and had the European war broken out a year later, I am convinced that Germany would have found the Roumanians on the side of her enemies. Even now, the prevailing idea is, "Let us settle accounts with the Hungarians, and not take our anxieties about the prospective Russian peril too tragically." A change might still come if only the position of the Roumanians in Transylvania had been improved. In point of fact, however, Germany failed to get any such improvement carried out, though according to the Roumanian view it could have been achieved had Germany been seriously resolved upon it. In general, the Roumanians believe that the decisive mistakes were made in Berlin: they hoped nothing from Austria-Hungary in any case, and they had made their alliance with an eye to Berlin, certainly not with any expectations of help from Vienna. Germany's intervention in the matter of the Treaty of Bucharest—an intervention in Roumania's favour—is viewed by the Roumanians as an "isolated friendly gesture," not as the outcome of a

Roumania and Austria

consistent policy. The Roumanians often alluded in Berlin to the difficulties of their relations to Austria-Hungary, emphasising their desire to get more directly into touch with the German Empire, with which they had no grounds of dispute or disagreement. Berlin, however, always referred the Roumanians to Vienna, thus in effect refusing Roumania's most cherished desires. For, after all, the Roumanians really wanted Berlin to promise them the inheritance in Transylvania when the time should come. In return for such a promise they would gladly have delayed their demands till death had actually occurred. That the dissolution of Austria-Hungary is inevitable sooner or later in the course of the present century, is an article of faith for the peoples of Eastern Europe—a belief, easy to understand, and one that I share with them myself. The utmost we can hope to obtain from Roumania now, i.e. during the war, is neutrality. Roumania might no doubt be induced to join against Russia if nothing else were involved, though the Roumanians in Bessarabia are far better off than those in Transylvania; but Roumania will never go against Russia so long as she is thereby committed to enmity with France, whom she loves, and with England, whom she respects as the peaceful arbitrator of Europe. Those who are not satisfied with the prospect of Roumania's

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neutrality may take it from me as certain that there is no hope of anything better; on the contrary, the only alternative is less favourable to us, unless the war be ended by quick and decisive German victories.

It is easy to understand, in the light of these few examples, how the German public has come to think that the Foreign Office did its work badly. Wherever the Germans hope for support they are also obliged to reckon with possible hostility.

August 24th.

The German victories in Lorraine turn out to be of very considerable importance. Six armies appear to be concentrated on the Western front. The names of their commanders are given as Kluck, Bülow, Duke Albrecht of Württemberg, the German Crown Prince, the Crown Prince of Bavaria, and Heeringen. The news from the Eastern theatre of war is somewhat more disquieting. After all, it seems that the Russians are invading East Prussia in great force—with twenty army corps, according to a report reaching us *via* London.

I am told by someone who came yesterday from the army now investing Namur that a special army corps has been formed out of the siege artillery attached to each of the separate

Francs-tireurs

corps; and that this special corps maintains a powerful bombardment of Namur and its forts. Eight Austrian 30·5-cm. howitzers are co-operating. Three forts had fallen up to yesterday. As the German heavy artillery is firing at very long range, it has not itself been under fire at all as yet—so he tells me. The infantry, however, has suffered serious losses, because it made repeated attempts to take the positions by storm before they had been battered down by the guns. Namur would probably fall by to-day, such was the extreme vigour of our attack. The fall of the fortress had not been expected till the end of this week. (The well-known Prussian habit of timing things to the minute!)

I was more interested in what he told me about our war against the *francs-tireurs*, which has not yet ended. The troops, according to his account, attack with the most horrible exasperation the moment a shot is fired from a house. Quite recently they had driven the male inhabitants of a village together to the number of 200 and shot them all. Unfortunately, too, many mistakes had occurred; for instance, whilst our soldiers were firing in one street, other soldiers of ours in another street would attribute the firing to *francs-tireurs* shooting from the houses and raze the whole place to the ground.

Lastly, I paid very great attention to another

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statement made by my informant, who is an officer—viz. that our soldiers have already taken to looting and pillaging to a very serious extent. They force their way into a house and demand all it contains, extorting compliance from the occupants at the point of the bayonet or by threatening to cut their throats. They take by no means only food, but money and valuables, sometimes even the most useless and extraordinary things. The cattle too are often driven off without any necessity, and then only left to die. Motor-cars, ammunition wagons and other vehicles are stuffed full of property looted in this way. My informant says he told his men yesterday to give back what they had stolen and to pay for any articles of food they carry away. He is in hopes that severe measures will soon be taken by Headquarters against this established practice of systematic looting. He says that at Liège, where our soldiers had treated the citizens with great severity and robbed them of everything, there have been repeated fights in the streets during the last few days, and that we brought up machine-guns and artillery. The truth is, according to his account, that the soldiers have become brutalised. Most of them have not gone into quarters for weeks, but have camped outside the villages, because there was reason to fear they would be treacherously murdered in

Invasion of East Prussia

their beds or, indeed, even in hospital; and as they have incessantly fired upon the population and ravaged ever so many villages, they have pretty well lost all sense of proportion and all power of judging as to what is and what is not permissible in war.

August 25th.

As the Russians are advancing in great force, the dikes in the flat country round Elbing have been cut, about 30 to 40 square kilometres* of land thus being flooded in order to protect the fortress of Dantzig. Everybody is profoundly impressed by this news. Only a short time ago reassuring statements were issued to the population, to the effect that there was no idea of abandoning Prussian territory to the enemy. Even yesterday everyone was saying, "The Russians? Nonsense, they will never have finished mobilising. They won't be able to advance for a couple of months. Long before then we shall have finished with France. We needn't bother ourselves any further about the Eastern theatre of war. If, however, the Russians should take it into their heads to advance—which is not likely, now that they have retreated from Poland—we shall be able to maintain ourselves on the defensive for a long time." The state of mind is entirely

* About 12 to 16 square miles.—*Translator.*

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different to-day. As practically all our troops are located in the West, optimism is evaporating and there is talk of abandoning the whole of East Prussia as far as the line from Dantzic to Thorn—which is said, moreover, to be a strategic plan formed long ago. Not one of us civilians has any idea at present where the main forces of the Austrians may be; and yet they must surely be concentrated against Russia. One hears a good deal of grumbling to the effect that “when all is said and done, Austria-Hungary takes longer even than Russia to get ready for war.”

Our retirement on Prussian territory before the Russian advance is said to be making a great impression on the Balkan States, according to reports already reaching us to-day. It appears that Roumania (whose King, moreover, fell ill a few days ago) is far from having decided to make common cause with Bulgaria and Turkey—as our politicians hoped, though I looked upon it as out of the question. On the contrary, the papers tell us Roumania is demanding of Turkey and Bulgaria that they shall remain neutral, and is reserving complete freedom of decision for herself in the event of either of them joining one of the belligerent groups. If this report is correct, Roumania's present intention is to prevent the European conflagration from spreading, and to suppress any ambitious schemes on the part of Bulgaria and Turkey.

Hatred of England

The news from the West continues to be favourable. Wolff's Bureau announces to-day that Namur and five of its forts are in German hands, and that the fall of the remaining four forts will soon follow. In my own circle of acquaintance, however, this announcement of Wolff's is completely eclipsed by a telephonic message from Headquarters. The message, anticipating the telegraph, informs us that three English divisions have been annihilated. Although no further details are known, the news has caused surprisingly keen satisfaction. I believe that the Germans, so far as their sentiment goes, would be less satisfied at the annihilation of three French army corps than if we made a clean sweep of the English divisions that have landed in France.

The favourite motto at present is, "Let us kill every Englishman thrice over and only half kill the French." This exasperation against England is not due solely to the hostile attitude she has adopted to Germany. There is a certain feeling of resentment in it, because the English have hitherto been practically unassailable, and have been able to pose as arbitrators of the Continent and the whole world without risking much themselves or making any serious sacrifices; because, too, the English, though as a rule they took no trouble but seemed to be mere spectators, derived advantage for themselves from those

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quarrels between the peoples of the European Continent which they are generally supposed to have fostered from selfish motives. It was a sheer delusion, people say, to suppose that, broadly speaking, England's Continental policy made for peace. England's professed aim—the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe—perpetuated Continental disunion and gave the English a pretext for continual interference. England, that had encircled the whole world with its power, might have been, and ought to have been, an inviolable empire, superior to all other political structures and eclipsing them as a civilising force: but she had persisted in the petty policy of the island kingdom of a hundred years ago, neglecting her great tasks in the world at large for the sake of keeping a jealous eye on events in Europe. "Let us hope the English will show themselves on the Continent in really large numbers," everybody says; "let us facilitate their landing. It will be all the easier to get a hold of England and deal a blow to her pride." There is not a trace in Germany of any kind of respect for England's military power.

· The Germans have faith in their superiority of numbers and armament. They do not really believe their bravery, vigour, skill, or any other special excellence will bring them victory. They

Faith in Numbers

are calm and confident the moment they have reason to hope that the numerical superiority is theirs. For, in point of fact, they rely on themselves at the utmost to equal, not to surpass, the achievement of other nations. It never enters their heads to feel ashamed of their numerical superiority over a weak opponent whom they are overwhelming—over the Belgians, for instance. The more they are convinced that the safety of numbers is behind them, the more noisy and jubilant their triumph at what they have done. They are like savages, drunk with any victory—be it only over unarmed victims—and dividing up the spoils, the treasure and the prisoners, with fierce exultation in their camp of tents. If a strong and courageous enemy—whose existence they, in their joyful confidence of victory, had not suspected—were to fall upon them unawares, they would retire again in hurried flight to their swamps and forests; and they would be just as contented to stay there as they were formerly eager, in their ignorance of distant places and foreign customs, to wander restlessly and without limit over all quarters of the globe.

If the Germans should now achieve the hegemony of Europe, a universal flight of Europeans will begin. Even the Germans will fall out among themselves and fly from one another. Europe's

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remotest corners will become the most coveted havens of refuge. An immense shifting of the centres of intellectual life will take place. And should no spot in Europe be left free from German rule, a regular "migration of the peoples" * will set in, whole peoples flocking to the countries overseas, everywhere and anywhere to be safe from the Germans. Europe will become so unpleasant a continent that it will hardly be worth while to put up with the discomforts of a visit to it. Outside the frontiers of the New Germanic Empire, however, no German will be able to show his face. *There*, either the Germans must quit the field or the others will. Disdain and abhorrence will make everyone insist upon being spared the sight of a German. Only when the inundation has at last spent itself may we perhaps look for a return in Europe to the old way of life—and, after all, the history of the great migrations in olden times authorises us to hope that the flood will eventually subside.

August 27th.

Under the direction of the German Foreign Office very great and unscrupulous efforts are now being made to win over the foreign countries

* "Völkerwanderung," the name given by German writers to the migrations of the Goths, Vandals, Normans, &c., which unsettled Continental Europe from about 300 to 600 A.D.—
Translator.

German Propaganda

which are still neutral, to arouse sympathy for Germany's cause in their Governments, members of parliament, citizens of eminence, authors, journalists—in fact, in persons belonging to every conceivable class. I shall say nothing here about the means employed, but confine myself to expressing my opinion that the result must be failure. Since Germany's cause in this war is the wrong cause, Germany's exertions to win adherents can in any case only be characterised as attempts at corruption. It is inevitably only the inferior members in the European system who are drawn into alliance with Germany: the most charitable interpretation of their action is to suppose they are deceived or influenced by motives belonging to a lower plane of civilisation.

At the present time our own newspapers are full of favourable testimonies to Germany, purporting to come from foreigners, but obviously of German origin for the most part and written by insignificant or anonymous persons. That being so, I hasten to record once more the real state of neutral opinion abroad. In Italy the whole of public opinion and the entire Press are hostile to Austria-Hungary, while the Government favours a policy of watchful neutrality. Our attempts to bribe Italy into a change of attitude are foolish and do us harm. The promises we are making to her may easily prove so many thorns in German

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flesh. Neither have the United States of America any sympathy for us. Americans resident in Germany, it is true, think it wise to stand up for the country where they draw their livelihood; but the entire American Press is hostile to us, while the Government is very reserved and certainly not inclined to make things easier for Germany. I described the conditions in Roumania a few pages back. As to Bulgaria and Turkey, if these countries support us, they are influenced at most by motives of self-interest and not by any nobler sentiments. Both of them will offer to join us as soon as they think the chances of victory are in our favour, and they will come to terms with us in regard to the gains they covet. Not a trace of enthusiasm, not a sign of an ideal, will inspire these our possible and prospective comrades-in-arms. Nor is any sympathy with Germany to be expected from States like Holland, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway or Sweden. The tragedy of Belgium has just been enacted before their eyes, and they are maintaining a severely correct attitude in order to afford no pretext for the violation of their own neutrality. If, however, they dared to speak freely and without fear, we should probably find that Denmark is hostile to us, that Norway has no desire to enter into more intimate relations, that Sweden distrusts us, whilst Holland would prefer to lean

Dum-dum Bullets

for support on England, and the Swiss feel themselves essentially alien in sentiment from us. Notwithstanding the painful situation in which they now find themselves, not one of these States would dream of hazarding its welfare on our success; for, if they did so, they would feel they had lost their independence and were forced to breathe a repulsive atmosphere. The Press of these countries too is hostile to the German cause, as the special attention it pays to our enemies' reports is in itself enough to prove; at best it is impartial, and then only from motives of prudence.

Let us then leave foreign countries in peace, neither suing like a fond lover for their favour nor expressing a sentimental gratitude to them.

The rumour of the poisoned wells having gone the round in several countries, a fresh accusation—equally absurd in my opinion, but still more stubbornly believed—has now been set afoot: “The enemy is firing with dum-dum bullets.” This rumour likewise is everywhere devoutly believed, until a few weeks later people will have cleared their minds and will see how improbable it is that an army should carry dum-dum cartridges. “Reassuring statements” have, after all, already appeared in the meantime, explaining that it is by no means easy to infect wells with

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cholera bacillus, and that it would be a simple matter to prevent the crime, if it were committed, from producing any injurious effects.

The German authorities, it seems, are not yet satisfied with the effect of their previous orders (to hunt for spies, for motors laden with gold, and the like); they want to arouse still more of the mediæval spirit. Some military block-heads want to renew the dangerous game of issuing proclamations calling upon the population to co-operate with the police. Somebody in military command somewhere or other has gathered, from reliable indications, that the enemy keeps carrier-pigeons in German territory which convey important information to foreign countries about our national defences. The population is to keep a look-out for the pigeons and their keepers.

Some of our papers say that Lord Haldane too is a liar and hypocrite, like all Englishmen, because he did not resign office (as Morley and another Minister have done), notwithstanding his often proclaimed German sympathies and his many solemn declarations in former days that a war between Germany and England was impossible. As though any German Minister would have dreamed of resigning in this war (or in any future war either) merely because of his sympathies with any of

The Road to Paris

Germany's enemies or because of the crime Germany has committed against Belgium! Besides, not a soul here knows why Morley left the Cabinet. Only the fact is known, not the reasons.

I have to record further that all the forts of Namur have been in German hands since yesterday, that the Crown Prince of Prussia announces another victory, that the Austrians also report a victory over the Russians on the Galician frontier and, finally, that a new Government has been formed in France to take the place of the Cabinet formed out of all political parties on the outbreak of war.

August 28th.

The Quartermaster-General, in a report on the whole situation in the West, announces that seven German armies are acting on that front; that a great advance has been made all along the line; and that at Maubeuge we have already begun to surround the enemy. Everybody believes that the fate of the hostile armies now fighting in the West is sealed, and that we shall soon proceed to invest Paris.

To-day's noon report actually contains the following news: "The English army has been completely defeated to the west of Maubeuge. Parts of our armies have forced their way forward

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at St. Quentin. The French armies are defeated and forced to retreat from every position where they still try to make a stand. The French Government has told the Belgians it cannot send them any more help, as France herself has been forced to stand on the defensive along the whole front."

I can only hope the French Government will have enough sense to issue a solemn warning to the civilian population not to take any part in the fighting; otherwise poor France may suffer a terrible fate. For we learn only to-day that Louvain in Belgium has been burnt to ashes. The story is that the people of Louvain attacked German troops on their way through the town, while the Antwerp garrison were making an unsuccessful sortie. Nearly the whole civilian population is said to have taken part in the rising. How infatuated the citizens and the municipal authorities must have been, not to see the uselessness of such a fight against regular troops and the certain destruction it would bring on their own people and country! For in such circumstances the enemy will proceed to kill and ravage indiscriminately. Let but a single lad fire at a dispatch-rider from a dormer window, and the mayor and many citizens will pay the penalty with their lives. A sudden onslaught made by a mob—and the lives and property of hundreds of the inhabitants are forfeit. But an organised attack

The French and Francs-tireurs

in the streets of a village or town results in the wholesale slaughter of men, women and children, and the utter destruction of their homes. Reprisals grow in severity with the momentum, so to say, of an avalanche. I feel anxious for France. Ever since 1870 the French have so often glorified the methods of the *franc-tireur* that I am almost afraid it is too late for their Government to preach prudence with success. I am even afraid that possibly their Government does not desire the civilians to be prudent, but would prefer them to share the army's fate. At least these thoughts were suggested to me by a conversation I held with a native of the South of France, a man of gentle disposition in other respects. I pointed out to him that, so far as I knew the Germans, not one of them would dream of raising a finger against the enemy's troops as they marched into his town; for no German would forget for a moment that any misdeed would only bring destruction on his own countrymen. He replied: "That may be, but we take a different view. A war against Germany is not a game, nor is it governed by rules like a duel. We shall not acknowledge defeat till the last ounce of our strength is exhausted. It is a war of extermination in any case, and we care but little how many lives are ruined. The German methods of warfare simply add fuel to the flames—this is the only result of their ruthless system of punishing all

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who resist their invasion, the innocent as well as the guilty. France will again wage a guerilla war. And I had rather witness the destruction of my country, I had rather see all France a heap of ruins, than that she should resign herself to the most terrible of all fates—to fall into the hands and under the domination of the Germans.”

August 29th.

Manonvillers, the strongest of all the French barrier-forts, fell yesterday evening and the road between Epinal and Toul is thrown open. It is true no doubt that, according to the French strategic plan which the *Tribuna* has published, the main forces of the French are established on a line between Epinal and Verdun, with Toul as their centre. But no one here believes that there is any French army still intact. I am convinced France will not be allowed to perish. Rescue will come. No mercy, indeed, is to be hoped for from the Germans. To-day I heard serious and influential persons say that the whole country from Calais to Marseilles must be incorporated in the German Empire, the inhabitants being ejected except so far as they emigrate voluntarily or declare themselves German. Some people actually think France will desert the English and, in order to save herself, join Germany in attacking England, the old enemy of the European Continent. But

A Saviour of Europe

such people are fools. France does not calculate as the Germans do, and her feelings are not for sale.

Were the Germans—or, to speak more correctly, their Prussian leaders—entirely different from what they are, there would in the end be no reason to grudge them the conquest of Europe, now that war has actually begun ; no reason to grudge them the privilege of shaping the future course of international relations. For all of us in Europe are longing for someone to settle our everlasting disputes and bring us peace and harmony at last. As no such saviour came from the upper classes, the peoples of Europe had begun to draw closer to one another, hoping he would emerge from below, from their own ranks. But a conqueror and a sovereign who is thus to bring unity to Europe—what must be his character and attributes ? He would have to possess absolute power, power to seize and keep everything for himself, to maintain the Wrong, to overthrow the Right : and yet, at the same time, he would have to be a man so constituted as to want nothing for himself, but to apportion all things according to his own enlightened intelligence of what is best ; a man of patient goodness, able to create a more perfect Right and to mitigate the Wrong by the removal of all domination and all inequalities, so far at least as the people of our time are ripe for such reforms. *Then*, if France

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were conquered, a noble love would raise her up ; her independence—yes, and her lost brethren too—would be restored to her ; all her greatness, all her spiritual distinction, would be left to her ; she would breathe more freely and bear herself more proudly, for no threats would cast their shadow on her life, no anxiety for the redemption of her lost provinces would weigh her down. The other countries would be treated with equal generosity. Moreover, the barriers of tariff would fall and conscription would have been abolished together with all that creates division and estrangement. The peoples even to-day would gladly submit to the absolute rule of such a monarch, who devotes his power, his goodness and his wisdom to rob himself that he may bestow justice on others. Knowing that he would readily resign his power as soon as the need for it were past, they would not obstinately rely upon their own poor fragments of strength and choose to fight for their own salvation rather than accept it as a free gift from his all-powerful hand.

No one can sketch the outlines of this Utopia without realising with a shudder that Prussia will never bestow on Europe a peace like that. The Prussia of to-day can only inspire the nations of Europe with a deeper hatred, can only goad them to demoniac frenzy. Prussia will rob them of all she can, and what she steals she will want to

The Alsatians

keep. She will surrender nothing of any value to herself ; and if she gives, it will always be at others' expense. Those whom she has conquered, those whom she has fallen upon and oppressed, will remain for ever under her heel. She will force every foreign people to subordinate their civilisation to her own barbarism. She believes in nothing but brute force in domestic and foreign politics alike. She recognises no power on earth but compulsion.

Every Alsatian who fled to France at the outbreak of war—e.g. Abbé Wetterlé—is proclaimed a scoundrel. And yet it would be so natural to make the following reflections :—The Germans, if they conquer a country, expect its inhabitants to repudiate their whole past and show themselves friendly to Germany. Henceforth the conquered people are supposed to have one duty, and one alone—viz. to learn to acquiesce in the altered political conditions, to become attached to their new Fatherland without delay, and to stake life and property in its defence, fighting on its behalf against every foe, even against their former friends. One need hardly trouble, according to German ideas, to achieve the spiritual conquest of the people ; the physical conquest of the country is sufficient and it would be wrong to view the population as anything more than an appurtenance of the soil. After all, if any inhabitant is not content to be so

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treated, he can emigrate; and those who cannot emigrate must learn to be content. If however the German Empire had lost a province, we cannot doubt that the inhabitants of this "pawn to bargain with at the conclusion of peace" would be expected to preserve the memory of their former Fatherland, suffering themselves to be deprived neither of their language, nor of their schools, nor of their implacable hostility to the invader. *Then* he would be proclaimed a scoundrel who should acquiesce in the new conditions created by the treaty between his former and his present Fatherland; and evil would promptly overtake all those who had exhorted the inhabitants to resign themselves to their fate, if ever the German Empire should succeed in restoring the lost flock to the fold. In other words:—So long as the fate of a country is decided by the rapacity of Governments and not by the will of the population alone, there exist no principles of logic or morality whereby the unfortunate inhabitants of a sundered province may guide their conduct. They cannot possibly satisfy both sides, but are bound to displease one or the other unless they sacrifice all principle and abandon all consistency. This is especially true of those who, in the course of centuries, have been forced to change their political complexion half a dozen or a dozen times. Governments should at least have compassion on such people, should treat them

The Poles

with kindness and patience, not with ruthless brutality. For these unfortunates no longer know which way to turn, living as they do in a perpetual tangle of conflicting duties and cross-influences. Did not their last ruler but one demand of them a greater loyalty than he himself proved able to show to them? And did not his successor order them in the strictest possible terms to forget their former lord? They are no scoundrels, no matter what line of conduct they may happen to adopt. They are martyrs to political immorality; the less they fear, the worse their fate.

The position of the Poles is, if possible, still more cruel than that of the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine. The three States who stole and dismembered Poland have fallen out. Russia calls upon her own Poles to show their loyalty, while she urges the German and Austrian Poles to obey the sacred duty of revolt from Germany and Austria, and to make common cause with their brethren in Russian Poland and with Russia herself. In return Russia promises them realisation of their dream—which also has suddenly become “sacred”—promises the re-birth and re-union of the Polish nation. “Under Russian suzerainty, of course,” it is added in parenthesis. Such is the voice of Russia—the Power that caused the dismemberment of Poland, that never for a moment withdrew its approval of the result and has suppressed all attempts to ameliorate the

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lot of the Poles. What is the voice of Prussia ? Prussia who, to put it mildly, does not love her Poles, has passed laws of expropriation against them, desires no intercourse with them, but endeavours with all her might to disintegrate them, to split them asunder and to blot them out—Prussia now summons her Poles to rise for the defence of the “Fatherland,” its territory and its civilisation, against Muscovite baseness and tyranny. Prussia publishes the most fulsome praise of her Polish subjects’ enthusiasm for the war, as though the poor downtrodden people were, one and all of them, volunteers ; whereas, in fact, they have been forced to serve, and at the first stirring of a spirit of freedom amongst them, they, their homes and families would be destroyed with fire and sword. Prussia points to Russian Poland and calls to her own Poles, “Join with us in the liberation of your languishing brothers ; the dawn of a new Poland is breaking.” And yet there is no idea of rewarding the Prussian Poles by allowing them to unite with the future State of Poland. Indeed, whatever happens, let no one imagine that Prussia would ever voluntarily surrender her Polish territories. She is more likely, if she wins, to round off Prussian Poland by adding to it a few more tracts of Polish territory. The Poles themselves can emigrate : Prussia will gladly do everything in her power to assist their emigration. Woe to them, however, were

Austria and the Poles

they to claim any Prussian territory ! Why otherwise is Prussia exciting their appetite for Russian territory ?

In any case, it is easy to see how difficult it is for a Pole to do right. They neither can nor dare act honestly. They must tack and trim till they can join the conqueror, and then they must once more turn and defend themselves against the conqueror. In the meantime, it is on Polish territory that the three opponents will let loose all the fury of their conflict. Poland is the bait by which they seek to compass one another's ruin ; and if, later, the liberation of Poland should result from their plotting, the triumphant smile of her people will be distorted with ghastly suffering.

I may add that everything indicates to-day that the Russian Poles intend to support Austria. In my opinion that would be the best attitude they could adopt for the present. In many respects Austria has treated her Poles well. The budding hopes of the Poles cannot lead them to seek, with any confidence or decency, for closer relations with either Prussia or Russia. Is that perhaps the reason why Prussia has thought fit to negotiate with the nascent Poland through the mediation of Austria ? Or is it because Prussia would prefer to promise nothing herself and afterwards to break all promises made by Austria ? I have no knowledge of the actual negotiations. But Austria too

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will find herself in an embarrassing position as regards the Russian Poles, as soon as the question of the Austrian Poles is raised. Still, Austria is bent on a far more generous and a far more honest solution than the other two Great Powers. It is my silent hope that Austria will one day surrender Galician Poland. Austria would be repaid a thousand times over by Poland's friendship. A better opportunity than the present is hardly likely to recur. I am, indeed, too much of a sceptic to reckon on this event : hence I conjecture that the Austrian Monarchy will endeavour to unite the whole of Poland under its rule—of course with the exception of the Prussian provinces, for the Prussians will surrender nothing. If the Poles were to agree sincerely to this half-way fulfilment of their ideal, one might be content even with this solution. For it would be of great advantage to the new Polish State, especially by enabling it to start on its development in peace and security, and even this concession would be sufficient to earn for Austria the gratitude of the Poles. But inasmuch as nobody nowadays wants to be an immediate neighbour of Russia, there is also a possibility that Austria, as well as Prussia, will hold fast to her present frontiers, so that the new buffer State of Poland will consist of fragments carved out of Russia's hide alone, though carved in generous measure. But if so, the liberated Poles will never

Decrees against German Women

cease to hold intercourse with their imprisoned brothers through the bars of the frontier, and the whole position will be more intolerable than ever. For indeed we might even live to see the new Poland in alliance with Russia. That is why I could wish that on this occasion at any rate Austria should so treat the Poles as to deserve their love and gratitude—should do more for them, I mean, than is obviously dictated to her by self-interest in her war against Russia. The Poles will mark the difference and appreciate it; they have a subtle feeling for such things.

The behaviour of our German ladies is really getting too bad! We are still in the first flush of victory, the last troop-trains of heroes have not yet crossed the frontier, our male population is still blazing with the fiercest hatred against the despicable foe—and yet, in our womenfolk, all other feelings seem to be overcome by a pleasurable excitement at the sight of real prisoners-of-war. Day after day our authorities, military and civil, issue decrees thundering against these undignified daughters of Eve, who—one must suppose—have interposed themselves, like a protective screen, between their own compatriots and the enemy prisoners and wounded. At some future date it will be worth while to gather together the incidents recorded in these decrees. Thus, for example, it

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is forbidden to approach the foreign soldiers, to be kind to them and to offer them refreshments; women are excluded from the stations during the passage of trains with prisoners, are forbidden to visit hospitals and prisoners' camps, are threatened with public denunciation and punishment. Again and again we are told it was just the same even in 1870. Are not these preventive measures equivalent to the involuntary admission of many a falsehood? The problem seems to me a deep one and worthy of psychological investigation. Moreover, we must not lose sight of the fact that—according to all accounts—our enemies' womenfolk are far from displaying friendliness to the captured German heroes. We must also remember how great a liking for exotic phenomena of all sorts and kinds the German girl was wont to show in times of peace. We should ponder all these data—and then draw our own conclusions.

August 30th.

The news came yesterday that five Russian army corps have been defeated in the southern part of East Prussia and driven back over the frontier. At the same time we learnt of a manifesto in which the new French Government speaks of the irresistible Russian advance on Berlin. The news of a somewhat unfortunate fight in the North Sea (near Heligoland) acts like a dash of water in

The German Soldier

the wine, Germany at present being only too drunk with victory. The English have not lost more than one ship, whereas three of the German light cruisers and one torpedo-boat have been sent to the bottom.

“We are a civilised nation, civilised through and through,” we keep repeating to ourselves and others; and back comes the answer, “Huns you are, and barbarians.” Yesterday von Moltke, the chief of the Great General Staff, proclaimed to the whole world that German soldiers are not incendiaries and assassins; it was only with reluctance that they defended themselves against the hostile population when it took part in the fighting. Yet I have heard fresh complaints from our own officers that it has become almost impossible to restrain the men, who loot and burn even without a cause.

One may certainly say that, on the whole, the German soldier is good-natured and does no harm to innocent folk, so long as he meets with no obstacles on his appointed path. Once thwarted, however, he becomes terrible. For he is devoid of the higher faculty of discernment, recognising the commands of duty only and not the voice of his individual conscience; moreover, under the stress of excitement he becomes positively blind and hysterical. Similar characteristics were exhibited in peace time by the men of our police force,

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whether in town or country. They too are essentially good-natured—though somewhat sullen and fussy, and more inclined to lay down the law and order people about than to protect them. What has caused our public to hate the police beyond all measure is the way they invariably behave when dealing with a crowd, a strike, or any other disturbance. The moment they have to clear a street, for instance, every vestige of tact deserts them ; they have no notion of pacifying the crowd and make no attempt to conciliate people by word or manner. They grow so excited themselves and so blind with fury that they are reduced to mere machines set in motion by the word of command. They charge with drawn sabres or firing their revolvers, and cut down everything in their way without a notion of what they are doing. The impressive, and yet meaningless, effect they thus produce may be attributed to a strange blend of fear and sense of duty. It is the frail, the helpless, and the innocent who form the majority of their victims, whilst those with any cunning or adroitness evade the onslaught of the clumsy automaton. Every single person, even amongst Germans, who has ever witnessed such a charge and has been caught or nearly caught in it himself, is filled with shame and indignation. Those indeed who have only heard of such things are apt as a rule to approve. Some foreign journalists

The German Soldier

were present in their motor-cars at an affair of the kind in Berlin two or three years ago. Although they produced their passports, the police charged, wounding them as well as their chauffeur. An apology was made to them, no doubt : nevertheless the opinion expressed by many people was that "nobody had any business to be there." As though conflicts between police and population, where blood is shed, were not just the occasions about which the public has a right to obtain full information !

So, too, I can form a clear picture of the German soldier in Belgium. He has the good-nature of a child—a quality in him to which our officers gladly bear witness—and is ready to help the inhabitants, to share his bread with them and make friends. At first he is inclined to hesitate and draw back from the horrors of war : but he feels himself absolutely bound to obey the word of command that drives him on—feels himself, I might almost say, helpless apart from the security and justification which that command alone can afford him. Next, however, and very soon, he has grown accustomed to every horror and is full of a terrible sternness when ordered to execute some abominable deed. In this condition he hears it rumoured that the inhabitants fire treacherously from their houses. He is seized with an uncanny feeling of excitement, with blind suspicion. He is told that

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ruthless measures must be adopted against any village and its inhabitants where there is reason to suspect they have taken part in the fighting. He has lost all discrimination; every unaccountable shot fired in a village becomes the signal for relentless murder. With berserk frenzy he forces his way into the houses and sets them alight. So long as his comrades continue to fire and murder, he follows their example and it is difficult to stop him. Nobody orders him to stop: what they all know—and all they want to know—is that a shot fired from a house entitles them, makes it their duty, to rave and rage till not a thing is left alive. Now, more than once I have been told that soldiers began to fire into the houses because comrades of their own were firing in another street. Oh, if only the German soldier were not in such a fearful hurry to do his duty against the inhabitants, even when innocent! Many an explanation might be given, many a distinction might be made. If the commanding officers knew how to adopt the right tone for reassuring the population, how to treat them with the right combination of indulgence and severity, their example would teach the common soldier, so that he would acquire a far greater sense of superiority than he has at present—a superiority more beneficial both for himself and for the enemy. The German soldier, trained as he now is and acting as he now acts, stands on

Burning of Namur

a level hardly above that of the Russian soldier. No circumstances could possibly justify the burning of Louvain. Having mastered the rising, we might have held a court-martial; but we ought to have made distinctions. We had no right to set fire to the town, even if we had given the inhabitants time to leave. At Namur, too, incredible things are said to be happening. A reporter gives us the following description: "The market-place and several other parts of the town are in flames, the reason being, once more, that our soldiers were fired at; the deputy-governor is searching in vain for a responsible officer, in order to learn on what terms pardon will be granted and provisions supplied to the town; thousands of weeping women and children are fleeing to the country, they know not whither. Hundreds of people are calling in terror from their houses, imploring to be told what they must do to get the firing stopped. Are they to leave their houses and doors open? Are they to stay in the cellars or go elsewhere?" . . . But I have quoted enough; anyone can read for himself the accounts given by our own reporters in the last few days. The most grotesque fact of all is that one of them actually accuses the people of Namur of "having no patriotism, for they have lost all self-respect and are making friends with the German soldiers."

It is terrible, chaotic, senseless. We have

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conquered Namur, but we are not masters of the situation; intellectually and morally we are unequal to it. We can make no distinction between a civic guard and a *franc-tireur*, between a town and a farm, between guilt and innocence. Our aim is victory by whatever means, and with all possible speed to have peace again. With this object we shrink from nothing. "Military necessity" is the justification for all horrors

Yesterday we again discussed all this frightfulness in a considerable company of influential men. I was the only one who did not approve of it. No one has a thought of clemency even towards Belgium. The Belgians are looked upon merely as enemies, and the beginning of the enmity is forgotten. The fact that since the appointment of a German Governor all newspapers must be published in German is greeted with jubilation. Whether the inhabitants understand German doesn't matter. They must learn it. When a Zeppelin drops bombs on the public buildings of Antwerp it affords much satisfaction. Antwerp is a fortress, and that gives the right to drop bombs. Besides, it is useful to spread terror where possible. A General writes in *Der Tag*: "Belgium is and will remain German. Not because we want the few millions of Belgian rabble—No! they can emigrate—but because we re-

The Plea of Necessity

quire their land, their minerals, above all their coast, their harbours, that we may have our knife at England's throat." When I objected to this way of talking, all exclaimed with one voice, "It is as he says, he is quite right."

There is no doubt they are bent on sowing hatred and violence; they will reap the whirlwind. At present to become German means for the poor Belgians the loss of all rights.

A nation which has proclaimed to the world, as we have done through our Chancellor, that necessity knows no law, has forfeited the right to moral indignation at the treachery of the *francs-tireurs*. For they too are under necessity. We have shown no respect for treaties, and we can expect no different attitude from other nations towards ourselves than the one we have manifested. But the position we have adopted will not help us to success. There is a moral element in the development of humanity which will vanquish us the more we have done violence to it.

I am only now beginning to know my countrymen properly. Only now do I fully understand the jeer of one of our diplomatists who said to me lately about a Dutch ambassador, "You know that's the sort of man who believes in the sanctity of treaties, as though a treaty settled the matter!"

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Whatever people say, a war like the present cannot be borne for long. Those who took the field after the long spell of peace knew not what they did. When they have been through a few battles, they will grow weary of the crime and will deem the prize not worth the stake. And those who for a while have been observers of the habitual lying and the distress at home will call halt. Commands will be uttered in vain, the number of the disappointed will be hard to resist. Only see how quickly our fire-eaters are depressed when for a few days no success can be recorded, when a few boats have been sunk, when the Russians have crossed the frontier. At such times all joy in the enemy's sufferings is forthwith quenched, and exultation gives way to reflection. But it would be shameful if failures and trouble alone put an end to the will for war. Better judgment should effect this. But will it? When will it? I know not. I fail to understand men now and begin to believe that I have never understood them, though I used to think I did.

August 31st.

Until the ways and aims of politics cease to be at variance with the plain principles of morality universal among men, the vocation of politics will be only an occupation for criminals. All servants

Politics and Morality

of the State to-day maintain the dogma that the State's advantage is the highest object, and one which consecrates all means. Craft, lies, forgery, deception, treachery, corruption, and murder now call forth no disgust, if only the State be advantaged.

But whence have we the right to set the State to which we belong above other States and nations, to deem its interests of higher importance than the clear commandments of morality? Are we not first of all human beings? Have we not the same task to fulfil in regard to all human beings? In its present form the idea of the State makes an artificial severance between human beings and sows the seed of all hateful qualities in their dealings with one another. The modern State would have its population brutal, selfish, envious, superstitious, and dull of perception in its relations with other human beings. But the morality of the State naturally colours that of all who are in any way the supports of the State. Thus the heads of industrial undertakings think they can employ any means in order that their work may bear the richest fruit. They, equally with the State, declare that this is done not from self-interest, but from a feeling of responsibility towards the undertaking, from anxiety for the welfare of the portion of humanity committed to their charge. Their subordinates are expected to take a worthy and dutiful

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view of things—to be, as servants, soft as wax, as workmen, hard as iron, just as the State expects its subjects to be. But as every servant is also in turn master, and it is impossible to keep the two standards of value apart—impossible not to mix the two kinds of moral coinage—the universal corruption and confusion in private and public opinion, endeavour and action, and finally the present war, are easy enough to explain.

If we are to restore to humanity its most important basis—mutual trust—we must above all combat the idea that there can be a different morality for different human beings or institutions. There must be for all a common and equal basis of morality. If as a result the contours of individual States are weakened, mankind will benefit. The form of government matters in the first instance but little. What matters most is the temper of those at the head. Owing to his great power, a humane monarch of great intellect can often do more for the liberation of mankind than the noblest leader of a republic. For the example of those above, be it good or bad, is soon heeded and followed by those below. But in our times the authorities often abuse the populace because it follows their example and draws therefrom conclusions adverse to themselves. No appeal is possible to the people's sense of justice, if they are expected to defend the injustice of the State.

Automatic Discipline

Some of our officers speak in tones of emotion of our "fine fellows," because the drill remains in their bones even during the campaign, because, for example, they jump up and salute, even when lying fagged out by the roadside, directly a superior passes. Is not this pathos of the officers itself pathetic? In peace times they have had the "fine fellows" so long in training, have taught them an unnatural bearing, a constrained gait, a mechanical salute, and now they are touched because this training lasts in war time, when one human life is often worth as much as another. But are you, then, not aware that this constraint, this automatic regulation of all movements of body and mind, suits the German? After his first sufferings under drill, he has gained a sense of security, lightness and cheerfulness which he loses as soon as he is no longer obliged to act by rule. No; leave him with his chains and puppet's wires, he loves them, they render life simple and good for him. Without his wires he would be helpless with his own complicated, clumsy mechanism, would be ashamed and hide himself away.

The affair of the dum-dum bullets, which I recently put aside so incredulously, is after all becoming very serious. The French and English use them! Thousands have been found in the cartridge pouches; the Kaiser has been shown

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specimens at Headquarters; the Crown Prince sends samples for inspection into the interior; at Nancy even a machine has been found for the production of such flattened bullets, forbidden by international agreements. Energetic counter-measures are officially announced. Of all this I do not yet believe a single word. The matter will certainly be cleared up. The next move will be for the enemy to make the same charge in reply—the *tu quoque* being one of the usages of war.

Among the reproaches now brought against France in our Press is the following: An "Alsatian," who has hitherto been a purveyor of gun-cotton to the French Army, deems it proper to make known in Germany that he has only sold in France such trash as the German authorities would never have taken from him. But he got splendid prices for his trash, for he had to bribe the French buyers. All Frenchmen who buy for the Army and Navy not only can be bribed, but must be bribed in order to do any business with them. But as he personally much prefers to do business without such means, he had always been glad to work for the German authorities at lower prices. And one need not be greatly surprised after these revelations to read that French ammunition is defective.

The honest Alsatian's self-accusation is certainly more amusing than his way of reviling the

International Law

French. There must have been an extraordinary growth of self-respect in Germany that a man should dare to publish this foolish effusion. It were better to take a look at the glass house in which German men of honour sit before one enjoys their stone-throwing.

Hitherto I had firmly believed that the elements of a code of international law in war had been established, which would under all circumstances be observed strictly, if only for fear of a relapse into utter barbarism. I seem to have been mistaken. Every day the newspapers report flagrant violations of international agreements and customs. I am not at the moment thinking so much of such charges as were brought with burning indignation against the Balkan States only a short time ago—charges of employing cruel modes of warfare, of refusal of quarter, mutilation of the dead and wounded, contempt for the Red Cross, bombardment of open towns, and similar atrocities. Certainly I should have thought that at least the civilised Great Powers would have cleaner hands in these respects. But transgressions which may be caused by misunderstanding, excess of zeal, or the arbitrary actions of individuals cause me less astonishment than the mutual denunciations on the ground of mine-laying in the open sea, the bad treatment accorded to neutral ships, the seizure of

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enemy ships in the waters of a neutral State, and, in general, actions which clearly point to instructions received from the highest quarters. Such are, for example, the cancellation of patents taken out by citizens of an enemy country, and of business obligations, the annulment of insurance rights, the seizure of the bank balances of aliens—and a thousand similar things, which all look as if not only international public right, but even private right were at an end, and as if every citizen of a hostile nation were regarded as an outlaw. Even if some reports are exaggerations or malicious inventions, a very unfavourable impression is left. Private morality is as much endangered as public.

September 1st.

The German victory in the East turns out to be very important. 70,000 prisoners, including two Commanding Generals, and the complete destruction of several army corps. On the other hand, the Austrians seem to be hard pressed in a big battle near Lemberg, which has already lasted six days and extends over a line of 400 kilometres.

Dutch papers report that the destruction of Louvain is to be ascribed to a terrible misunderstanding. Believing themselves attacked by the population, bodies of German troops are said to have fired on each other. This rumour is all the

The German Colonies

more terrible to me because I know definitely that such errors have occurred at other places in Belgium. I am even afraid that pretty much the same thing happened at Namur. I have already said what I think of the state of mind produced in the German soldier by the first crackle of rifle fire. The Dutch papers only express my own feeling when they say, "Even if the German version of the behaviour of the population of Louvain proves correct, is no compromise possible between the stern usage of war and regard for humanity, for West European civilisation? One blow has destroyed that for which centuries were famous."

Germany represents England as having begun hostilities in all the German colonies. I should never have thought it so important to England to win cheap successes overseas. The fights between little white detachments in Africa and elsewhere can make no difference to the issue of the European War. But the loss of prestige of the white men with the natives is tremendous, and must have bitter consequences hereafter. Moreover, here too the breach of an international treaty is said to be involved, for by the Congo Act certain African colonies were to be unaffected by a war between the Mother countries. Of course, I don't yet know whether it is the fact that the

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English began the colonial war. If I had confidence in the sources of German news I could not doubt it.

In Germany people are delighted at the "really statesmanlike speech" which John Burns, who left the Cabinet because of the war, has recently delivered in London.* It gives comprehensive reasons why Burns considers that the present English Cabinet was foolish in abandoning neutrality. Whether he is right or wrong, would such a criticism of German decisions be allowed in Germany at a great public meeting or in the Press? Certainly not. But none of the German admirers of Mr. Burns seem to think of that. "Really magnificent, he hits the nail on the head," they say, and nothing more. It is a real misfortune for me to differ so greatly in opinion from my countrymen on the most important and most trivial matters alike. I am a foreigner both within and without the frontiers of my country.

We read that the French Mediterranean Fleet saluted the little Austrian ship *Zenta* with beating of drums and flags at half-mast when it sank after a brave fight against odds. "Theatricalism," someone said to me contemptuously. I see in it a feeling of chivalry which prevents men from becoming completely barbarised, a certain respectful impartiality,

* This speech was never delivered.—*Translator.*

A Partisan God

an endeavour to be reconciled with a falling foe and to show freedom from hatred and malice. Such acts of the enemy cannot be condemned by calling them "useless and unnecessary." Another time they may be a great blessing, and we shall then, perhaps, be heartily grateful for such theatricalism.

The appeals and praises to God go on without cessation. Not a telegram in which the Kaiser doesn't say, "God has helped," "may He continue to help," "He will still help," "the God of Christianity, the German God, the God of Battles who does not forsake the righteous cause." What will he say if the war should be lost? Will he change his phrases, or will he speak of the superior strength of the enemy, of the treachery of friends, of mistakes of politicians or generals, of mustering new strength, of speedy revenge or of wise submission to the force of circumstances? Will he and his myrmidons admit that they have been deceived in God and have praised Him prematurely? Will they acknowledge the injustice of our cause if God's verdict goes against us? Will they then see that there is no partisan God? Is this continual reference to God due in part to narrowness of outlook, or is it merely political wisdom? Does the real believer regard it as blasphemy or as inspiration? And what does the sceptic, the unbeliever, feel about it?

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The Protestant clergy welcome the Christian battle cries of our supreme war-lord with a frenzied roar of delight, and speak as if God were about once more to make genuine Protestant Prussianism the cure for His world. The Catholic clergy are more moderate and humane. But then they stand on a lower level of Prussian culture. Yet, whichever variety of the present-day confessors of Christ we take, were He to appear among us and to pass through the armies, battlefields, headquarters and capitals, who of them would dare to raise his eyes and call himself His disciple ?

It is to be hoped that as soon as the war is over the feeling of the nations or the wisdom of Governments will prohibit private armament factories. State arsenals for the production of munitions are not so bad, they are limited to their own country. But the contractors who use every means to tempt foreign countries to purchase arms are, in great measure, to blame for the fact that the world bristles with arms and that no country thinks it can assert its claims except by force of arms. What a step forward it would be if the victors could put an end in every country to the manufacture of arms, and could restrict the production of war material, weapons, munitions, explosives, etc., to State arsenals ! If the trade of private factories were put down or they were at least forbidden to sell

The English Blue Book

directly or indirectly to foreign customers, so that the shameless and unscrupulous competition for foreign orders was abolished, States would not indeed cease from the rivalry in armaments, but they would much more easily come to some agreement.

September 2nd.

I have read the English Blue Book on the events which preceded the European War. It is scarcely possible to feel fully informed until one can weigh all diplomatic publications, the one against the other. I will therefore only write down some impressions left on my mind by my reading. Austria's reluctance to discuss with London or St. Petersburg her steps against Serbia stands out clearly. Her ultimatum to Serbia was, I feel afresh, a blow dealt by a State which was conscious that in argument it must come off second-best. Serbia's reply appears to me even more obliging than I had thought it in recollection. She really promises all that Austria-Hungary demands, and is not afraid of losing anything in the eyes of the world by trying courteously and considerately to appease her almost frenzied opponent. My belief that the Serbian Government sincerely wished to avoid the war has been strengthened. Sir E. Grey's proposals for a Conference and mediation give evidence of the best will, of great circumspection and foresight.

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The malice and perfidy of the German attitude—that no one must intervene in the dispute between Belgrade and Vienna—are revealed to me more clearly than ever. Russia's attitude gains considerably in comparison with that of Germany or Austria-Hungary. I learned with special interest of Germany's endeavours to reach a general understanding with England in regard to her neutrality. England seems to me to have made the right replies. But I nevertheless have the feeling that it would have been better if Germany had been compelled to reckon definitely on finding England on the side of France. No doubt, Grey was unable to show his hand more clearly at the outset; but had he been able to do so, I can't help thinking that Germany and Austria-Hungary would have given up their warlike attitude.

The Blue Book shows some of our diplomatists in a somewhat strange light. The Foreign Secretary in Berlin declares to the English Ambassador that the Serbian Government had been unable to swallow some of the Austrian demands, that he had not known the contents of the Note, which left much to be desired. On the other hand, the German Ambassador in Vienna told his English colleague that he subscribed to every word of the Note. Moreover, it is asserted that he was acquainted with the text before it was despatched, and telegraphed it to the Kaiser. The German

Germany the War Maker

Ambassador in St. Petersburg is said always to have reported to his Government that Russia would never let it come to war.

Many passages of the Blue Book bear witness to Belgium's honest determination to preserve her neutrality and to defend it against every Power. It shows, moreover, that neither France nor England had the remotest intention of violating Belgium's neutrality themselves. England not only demanded that Belgium should resist every violation of neutrality, but also promised her full support.

Those who did not know it already can see from the Blue Book that Germany seized the first excuse for war; for she not only replied to Russia's mobilisation by mobilising herself, but sent an ultimatum with a short time-limit demanding Russia's demobilisation, and declared war without hesitation. If the German mobilisation had not meant immediate war, if Germany had left the world a little more time for reflection, then with a particle of goodwill all could have been arranged. The Blue Book shows that, at the very moment when Germany sprang at her neighbours' throats with her declarations of war, Vienna and St. Petersburg had practically come to an agreement: thanks to Grey's mediation, St. Petersburg had finally consented to Austria-Hungary's obtaining satisfaction in Serbia, provided that Serbia's integrity and

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sovereignty were preserved. It is only necessary to read the Russian Ambassador's declaration in Vienna on the 1st of August. The tension between Russia and Austria no longer defied all attempts at adjustment; but the tension between Germany and Russia, in which Austro-Hungarian interests played no part, brought on the catastrophe.

It is interesting also to see from the Blue Book that England raised no objections on the ground of the violation of Luxembourg's neutrality, but apparently has a doctrine of non-intervention dating from the year 1867.

Finally, I note that the Italian Government communicated to the French Government on August 1st* that Germany had informed Italy of her ultimatums to Russia and France, and had inquired Italy's intentions. The Italian Government replied that, according to the German Ambassador's own words, the war undertaken by Austria had an aggressive aim and was therefore not in harmony with the purely defensive character of the Triple Alliance. That being the case, Italy would remain neutral.

September 3rd.

The Army of the Prussian Crown Prince is reported to have fought successful battles and to have reached a line between Verdun and Rheims.

* See Blue Book, No. 152, and French Yellow Book, No. 124.
—Translator.

East and West

The battle of Lemberg has already lasted eight days and seems to be going against Austria. During the last few days Prussian troops have been conveyed to the East, all train connections being again suspended. Perhaps they have been sent to help Austria ?

September 4th.

All the fortresses of Northern France are in German hands, Maubeuge alone being still invested. German cavalry has reached the outskirts of Paris. Evidence is accumulating of the tremendous importance of General von Hindenburg's victory in East Prussia. Austria-Hungary reports successes at Lublin, but at the same time admits that her troops have retreated at Lemberg with heavy losses. People in Germany are surprised that the Russians were able to break into East Galicia with such superior forces. After all, the Russian mobilisation was accomplished more quickly than we had hitherto supposed.

The German Press has much to learn from the respectful and decorous tone in which the war correspondents of the Dual Monarchy speak of the Russian soldiers and their behaviour. More sympathy is immediately felt for a cause when its champions do not talk so big as the Prussians, who seldom find a single redeeming feature in their

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opponents, either as individuals or as a nation, but overwhelm them with scorn, insults and threats. Even official military reports drop their usual concise mode of expression when they begin to cast reproaches on the enemy. I am especially distrustful of the more and more verbose assertions that the English employ rifle bullets forbidden by international law, although it is said that great quantities of such ammunition have been captured. Doctors have told me that quite unobjectionable rifle bullets may produce very complicated wounds, because the lead very frequently leaves the thin copper or nickel casing. Therefore the state of the wounds affords no certainty of the employment of dum-dum bullets. We knew, of course, what the enemy's rifle ammunition was like before the war, so that deviations from it can easily be ascertained.

We are beginning to be impressed by the achievements of the nobility in the war, yes, even those of us who will not admit that its existence is justified by such achievements because everyone in Germany has to do the same. When it comes to princes and royalties fighting and falling, many people feel a new respect, nay even astonishment and admiration, as if they had never expected to find so much courage still left in the nobility or such eagerness to stand the test and prove their worth

Individual Self-Determination

—as if they had never thought that the nobleman would risk his life like other people. Such is the modesty of the German nation in regard to its leaders of noble rank, who yet, after all, are fighting for their own most special traditions, for their own political system.

“To obey no one but oneself.” One might be tempted to take this precept as the basis of morality in future. The results can hardly be worse for mankind than those of the present system, where we depend on others in a thousand ways which make our life an inextricable tangle of untruthfulness. But this precept would, beyond doubt, work beneficently if we linked it with another, namely, the duty of being kind to all men and of hurting none, and allowed an exception to be made only up to a certain point towards those who had themselves sinned too grievously against the principle of kindness. Apart from this there would be no compulsion, only the convincing of voluntary listeners, and commands would be given only so long as obedience was gladly offered. All co-operation would be voluntary, and compacts would only last as long as the will freely to observe them. The unhampered development of these two ideas would produce a gigantic revolution; therefore arrangements would need to be made for a long period of transition, until these principles had been

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firmly established and were observed by the majority of men as comprehensively as our present laws. It would be necessary, whilst keeping the goal in view, to steer towards it gradually, and in the interim to make many exceptions, without however forgetting that they are exceptions which are to be discontinued as soon as they become superfluous. Who that thinks thus would not himself feel doubts ! But we must not grow faint-hearted in face of a great and good goal. Begin with small steps, and great things will become easy.

I am just thinking that only a few hundred years ago the men who rendered military service to lords and countries were, from the point of view of nationality, a motley and chance collection. In this respect the nobles were especially international. Peoples and countries were divided, distributed, united, settled and remodelled by the princes just as their caprice, their necessities or their need to make an exchange dictated. How came it that out of this wild fighting there arose so quickly the yoke of universal military service, and that to the bungling result of shaping countries and nations there was given a sacred permanence just in the condition in which it happened to have crystallized ?

We are astonished by the official telegram that the French have abandoned Rheims without

French Strategy

resistance and are everywhere in retreat before the German advance from the North. Immense, incalculable spoils. I suppose France wants to save her fortified towns from useless sufferings, and therefore abandons them. But I should think the French are giving the Germans too many advantages by thus facilitating their advance, which in any case is being made at a great pace. Until now everyone had thought the French would obstinately defend the so-called second belt of fortresses, Rheims, Laon, La Fère. Now the road to Paris lies open. Whilst trying to hit upon a plausible explanation, I remember having read that some French generals even wished the Germans to occupy Belgium and a large part of France before the decisive battles were fought. They believed that the Germans would seriously dissipate their forces by this extended occupation, and would far more easily succumb to the counter-stroke of the French troops than if they could at once hurl themselves in superior numbers against the whole French army. That may be correct, but the German occupation will greatly depress the French, and in the attempts to drive the Germans out by force-still greater misery will fall upon France.

September 5th.

To-day I was visited by two Turkish officers. They were very pleased at the world-war, because it

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would enable Turkey to re-establish her sovereignty over Islam. They considered the situation excellent; the Sublime Porte was at one with Germany and waiting for the sign to begin. The Turkish Fleet would, under German leadership, first settle accounts in the Black Sea. They had for some time been sending large bodies of Turkish troops to Trebizond without opposition even by sea. Soon Russian Armenia and regions far beyond the Caucasus would be freed from the Russian dominion. They had got into touch with Persia, Afghanistan, and the Mohammedan population of India. A perfect understanding existed with the Arab Sheikhs, who, at a sign from the Caliph, would break into the English districts. At Damascus an army was being formed which would march to Egypt. A general rising in all countries linked by religion with the Sultan would put an end to Russian and English dominion. Turkey would not take the initiative against Greece, but an army under Liman Pasha would remain in Europe. Even without a war against Greece, Germany would see to it that Greece restored the islands. Germany, indeed! Germany shows herself the true friend, the rescuer of Turkey, the saviour of the world of Islam! Last spring I was twice in Constantinople, and now could scarcely trust my ears at this sudden and delightful change of key. The truth is that Germany goes without precious war material and

Turkey and Bulgaria

sends enormous train-loads of it—*via* Roumania and Bulgaria—to Constantinople. That creates friendship. The negotiations between Turkey, Bulgaria and Roumania, my Turks continued, have had a very valuable result. It is agreed in the first instance to remain neutral. But if the interests of one of these three States require it to take part in the war, the other two will remain neutral in regard to that one. Thus none need fear a stab in the back from either of the others. Indeed, the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria are so cordial that they may confidently be expected to go to war simultaneously on the same side.

I should like to put in a small query as to the attitude of Roumania, the proud guardian of the Treaty of Bucharest, in regard to Bulgaria ; for the rest the description given by the two happy Turks is very likely correct. Incidentally I may say that they themselves will await the issue of the world conflagration in Germany, where they are on a mission from their Government.

Yet another discussion about the division of the spoils after the war—this time at a most confidential gathering of the tiptop manufacturing brigands ! I am still quivering with shame ; these modern German manufacturers are repulsive enough to make one vomit. If the English have

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at any time pursued a shopkeeper's policy, they must be outdone by Germany, so these industrial gentlemen think, with a policy of undisguised robbery ; even foreign private property must not be spared, especially in the case of districts rich in coal and metals, big factories and enterprises. One gentleman hotly maintained that Germany must annex Belgium at once, as Italy had annexed Tripoli, so that in the later peace negotiations Belgium might be eliminated from the discussion altogether. At the same time, he insisted, there must unquestionably be drastic expropriation of all the more important industrial and other private businesses. In the peace terms France is to be obliged to bear the cost of indemnifying the victims. Moreover, we must not repeat the mistake we made in Alsace-Lorraine in 1870 when the leading men were allowed to remain in the country : for they are now the chief source of Alsace-Lorraine's attachment to France. This time all the influential elements in the annexed country must be compelled at once to depart, unless they unreservedly accept the new order of things. The speaker laid strong emphasis on the fact that his fellow-manufacturers, Thyssen, Stinnes, Kirdorf, were using all their influence to carry through the vigorous policy he described. These gentlemen, he said, had already applied to the Chancellor to add to the German administrative body in Belgium an

“True Patriotism”

industrial expert, who should go round and inspect all the industrial works and properties in Belgium and mark everything that would be of use to Germany. His friends' zeal caused the shark whom I quote to make the following proposal: The Chancellor should at once be approached and induced to appoint a gentleman belonging to this shark's own concern to “support” the German Government in Belgium as industrial expert, and this gentleman should take a special interest in the firm of Cockerill at Seraing. To prevent competition from Cockerill, it was decided to try at the outset to acquire secretly the majority of the shares. As a veil for their interested purpose, which was chiefly concerned with Cockerill's manufacture of arms, these gentlemen chose a man unconnected with armaments to see how the land lay.

This dainty specimen of true patriotism was put before us with many embellishments. They said: “In order that the great sacrifices of our nation may not be made in vain, we must take just as much in land and private property as we can hope to be able to digest. Moreover, it is urgently necessary to keep the imagination of our people busy after the war by pointing to the enormous enlargement of our territory and our enrichment in other ways, and also to the chances which exploitation offers. Only thus can the nation be diverted from the demand for so-called inner

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reforms. If this is not done, the state of things in Germany after the war will be worse than it was before."

There were, however, dissentient voices. Experience, said one, has taught us that we are not able to assimilate foreign peoples. We ought to content ourselves with such territorial increase in the East and West as strategic and economic interests show to be desirable. On the other hand, we ought to make France, Belgium and Holland dependent on us by drastic treaties, to secure exclusive advantages for ourselves by tariff arrangements, and to demand the French mineral districts, which all lie near the frontier, as a part of the war indemnity. In the annexed territories, certainly, we ought to take energetic measures for expropriation and expulsion. The war indemnity, at a rough estimate, ought to amount to 50 milliards of marks,* and must be paid not, as in 1870, in bills, but chiefly in goods, property and minerals, as being much more to our advantage. In this way we should achieve the important result that it would be just as impossible in France as in Belgium ever again to develop a strong iron industry.

Another speaker cautiously expressed a doubt whether the State could set an example of robbery without injuring the morality of the nation, and therefore recommended a solution which, whilst

* 2,500 million pounds sterling.—*Translator.*

Annexations

leaving private property unmolested, should incorporate the districts in which it is situated with Prussia, not however with the German Empire, lest the state of things in Alsace-Lorraine should be repeated. The population of the annexed districts would, he said, certainly be a hard nut to crack, for it was undisciplined and unused to strong government; but it must be taught discipline and obedience by whatever means might be necessary. Everyone agreed with him in this, and also with his fervent appeal that after the war the German people should be brought to regard it as their most sacred duty to bring into the world as many children as possible—who will have the pleasing prospect of entering into the inheritance of those inferior and subjected peoples.

Both in words and sense the speeches were all about power, material prosperity, spheres of activity, discipline, method. There was no thought of justifying their domination on any other ground, no idea of any benefit or consideration which they owed to the vanquished—in short, no magnanimity. They mean to lay themselves in the other peoples' bed, and are quite willing to be called barbarians in return. They have not the least ambition to win the others by moral means.

On the outbreak of war Maeterlinck, Wells, Shaw, Jerome and other writers have felt impelled

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to take up an attitude of opposition to the German cause, just as many of our literary men, Gerhart Hauptmann for example, have publicly expressed their belief in its justice. The effect this has had on the German Press affords horrible evidence of the German way of thinking. These foreigners are called ungrateful traitors on the ground that it was German readers who first made them rich and famous. As though that obliged them to adjust their sentiments to the currents from time to time flowing in Germany! It is somewhat like "Don't quarrel with your bread and butter." The mere suggestion that such conduct is expected from leaders of thought is shameful, seeing that their value and usefulness lies in their independence.

I have read amongst other things that a league of German critics has been founded, who pledge themselves never again to mention or discuss in Germany any writer or poet of France, England, Russia, etc. These writers are to be killed by silence and to remain unknown to German readers. Still worse to me than the narrow-mindedness of this resolution, and the harm it will do, is the discovery that even Germans of this sort have no real respect for the realm of mind. Whether or not an idea may find expression, whether or not it is of value, is to them simply a question of political expediency, a matter for the police. The league of critics says explicitly it is "willing" to except

Zealots of the Press

learned works from the boycott; it does not "intend" to gainsay the achievements of foreign nations in the sphere of learning. Apparently it thinks it can, if it chooses, gainsay this branch of intellectual life as well, which will then cease to exist for the Germans.

Over and above this, other zealots of the Press do not stop short even at learning and science. No foreigner is in future to be allowed to do scientific work at German universities. Some university professors, especially medical professors, are violently reproached and threatened because they worked in common with foreign savants. All scientific and learned posts are to be reserved exclusively for Germans. No foreigner must anywhere or at any time be appointed to a place for which a German candidate can be found—so that whether the German is as capable as the foreigner is to make no difference at all. Progress and the interests of humanity have almost ceased to count with these mad barbarians. Not mind, but brute force, not quality, but mass are decisive. What a foul stable has Germany become! Who will cleanse it?

Those who pull the strings to-day show great consideration for Catholicism, although they hate it. It represents to them great mass and therefore a great element of power. In particular they

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are at the present moment sounding the new Pope and are full of expectations because he is said to be a political, not a religious Pope like his predecessor. It is whispered in the highest circles in Berlin that the Pope is a shrewd fellow, and that his personal preference for the French world does not impair his appreciation of political arguments. The German simpletons believe in all seriousness that they can induce him to take Germany's side against France and Belgium, and have been in a great hurry to put out their feelers, for "first come first served." A highly-placed Protestant told me, with indescribable impressiveness, that the Pope was now of more importance to Germany than any Great Power, especially this Pope whom he had known as a Cardinal. In domestic politics also much now depends for the Government on the Catholic Church—i.e. the Central Party—not merely because, owing to their strength, the Catholics can turn the scale in important debates, but also because it is desired to gain their approval for the annexation of the Catholic countries of the West. And as a fact there are some abominably "pushful" persons in the Centre Party who actually pose as pioneers for the realisation of Germany's intentions regarding Belgium, etc., because they want at any price to be somebodies. But more of this on another occasion.

Travelling with Soldiers

September 6th.

My first railway journey since the outbreak of war. An enormously long "fast train," with three times as many passengers as it would hold, wounded soldiers in most of the carriages, a saloon carriage apiece for an Austrian General and an American Ambassador, and a wagon with 80 army chaplains. The train stopped very often, and at every station voluntary war-helpers were at work enthusiastically offering food, drink and tobacco in profusion to the men in uniform. Most of the soldiers whom I saw in my first-class compartment belonged to older levies, and, not having yet been in action, seemed not-quite accustomed to being transformed into heroes and to the noisy honours paid to them. Perhaps, too, they were still engaged in a little reflection. In any case, they sat firm in the places of honour, fastening their calm eyes on two numerous families standing in the corridor in front of them, who came from Holland and had previously been in Belgium. I also stood: these dirty Landwehr men* gave me an uncomfortable feeling as if we better-dressed people had demanded something wrong from them. There was one who had seen some fighting and had been shot in the pelvis. He looked exceptionally intelligent, spoke very correctly and, from what he said, had for years held a post in England. The stories this fellow

* Men of the Second Reserve.—*Translator.*

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told the Landwehr men were 'scandalous lies. I found my conjectures as to the worthlessness of soldiers' letters and soldiers' statements as evidence fully corroborated.

In the first place he explained to his hearers the 42-cm. guns, which, contrary to his assertion, he could never have seen, otherwise he would not have said *inter alia* that they were fired from a distance of several kilometres by wireless telegraphy. Then he described the attack on Namur made by his division, which, despite violent rifle fire from *francs-tireurs*, had swum across the river and penetrated into the town. Details showed quite clearly that he really took every man in Belgium, even though in uniform, to be a *franc-tireur*. He bragged that, as soon as a shot had been fired in a village, he and his comrades had set fire to the houses without further examination and massacred every human being within reach. I was, besides, struck by the fact that he retailed almost all the sensational reports of the newspapers as personal experiences either of his own or of acquaintances in his detachment. Thus, he gave exactly the same description as the newspapers of the havoc wrought by dum-dum bullets. Further, he gave an account of the wire cables which the Belgians had stretched around Namur and charged with electricity, and told how his comrades who ran up against them fell down dead like flies. All

Soldiers' Letters

delivered in a tone which brooked no contradiction, in the tone of one who had seen terrible things and still lived remote from our world and far above it.

Now, can it be said that this fellow is an exception? Does not experience teach us that in face of terrible events nearly all men—even persons of education—suffer an extraordinary diminution in their power of recollection, in their ability to distinguish between what they have themselves experienced and what they have read or heard from others, and in their moral strength to tell the bare truth? I pass over the frightful thoughtlessness and unreliability with which most people express themselves even in normal times. It is on the evidence of these men that the most monstrous charges against the enemy's methods of warfare are founded to-day. Their letters from the front, bristling with tales of heroism—or in other words written with the artlessness of a savage—are sought after and published as documents on which a detailed account of the campaign is some day to be based. I should like to feel that I too have made a contribution to the last-named excellent object by reproducing the utterances of this participator in the campaign. The worst effect of this confusion in our soldiers' minds is undoubtedly felt by the poor inhabitants of the hostile country, who fall as defenceless victims of countless misunderstandings and prejudices.

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I reached Berlin in the evening. A great crowd greeted the entry of the train with hurrahs, and began to sing "The Watch on the Rhine." Elegant ladies enchantingly waved handkerchiefs. More people than usual in the streets, looking out for news-placards. In the hotel many families belonging to the landed nobility, dozens of them seated together in circles. The ladies knitted stockings; the gentlemen yelled questions to one another about the events of the war. That's all I have to say of Berlin.

September 8th.

On the journey from Berlin to Dresden the train passes a large prisoners' camp—a bit of heath fenced in with wire. The erection of sheds and tents is not yet finished. Many soldiers in red trousers and blue coats were standing and lying about on the scanty grass. They appeared to have no protection or shelter as yet but an awning. It reminded one vividly of a zoological garden. In Dresden I was given particulars of another camp in the neighbourhood, where 14,000 prisoners of war are housed. They sleep three together in a horse-stall on straw, no light is supplied, and they have to go to rest as soon as it is dark. For 60 pfennig* per head and per day a contractor supplies coffee

* About 7d.—*Translator.*

In Vienna

in the morning, potatoes with rice and sometimes a piece of meat at noon, and soup made with flour in the evening. Those who have money can buy themselves something at a canteen, but no alcohol. I was told the French had as a rule plenty of money, the Russians generally only a few roubles; and that the French were well fed and decently behaved, the Russians like starved animals.

The fall of Maubeuge is announced, with 40,000 prisoners.

September 9th.

I am in Vienna. The mood is very confident, in spite of the retreat from Lemberg and the second battle now being fought in that region. Immense enthusiasm at the swift advance of the Germans in the West. Great expectations of help from their German ally against the Russians. But for the motor ambulances rushing in frantic haste with shrill whistling through all parts of the city, and the officers and soldiers swarming in all the streets, it would sometimes be possible here to forget the war. In the hotels there was still a very international class of people. French was spoken freely and keenly, which would probably not be permitted in any first-class Berlin hotel—if indeed any foreigners at all had been able to endure Berlin so long as this.

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I conversed with some Roumanians. They convinced me that Roumania's intervention on the side of Austria-Hungary cannot be expected. They said that King Carol had indeed tried to bring in Roumania from the first, but had been unable to find a ministry to carry out such a policy. The feeling in the country was entirely in favour of the French, and even against the Russians there was not much ill-will. A genuine hatred of Hungary was burning in all strata of the population. The eyes of the Roumanians were directed, not to Bessarabia, but to Transylvania and the Bukovina. Besides, Russia would give up Bessarabia as well. But they were afraid of having too much to do with Russia. It was still just possible to carry out a policy of taking sides with no one, but the whole country would rise against the man who should attempt to take the side of Austria-Hungary. To restore the connection with Germany was impossible, unless Austria and Hungary were to change completely. It was clear to all Roumanians that the Dual Monarchy would not now voluntarily make any important concessions to them. But Roumania could wait, all the more because taking sides at present meant exposing herself to invasion and becoming, to a considerable extent, the theatre of war. Italy's attitude had made a great impression in Roumania.

To judge by all I heard on this occasion, one can reckon with some confidence and for a

Austrians and Roumania

considerable time to come on Roumania's neutrality. It will be late before she shows her colours, if at all. She will calmly watch events if Turkey should begin hostilities against Russia, especially so long as the war is confined to Asia. I should also be inclined to believe that Roumania will remain quiet if Bulgaria attacks Serbia, although she probably does not herself know to-day what decisions she might have to take if universal confusion once more reigned in the Balkans. Roumania's attitude was fully intelligible to the Austrians with whom I spoke. They admitted that Austria-Hungary had made many political mistakes, and had done so also in the case of the Roumanians. For this Hungary alone was to blame. The Hungarians are a sore point with the Austrians.

As local colouring the following little episode deserves mention. When a portly sergeant-major, decorated with many medals, gracefully saluted, I asked my Austrian companion how it happened that this characteristic specimen of the Viennese type wore a Turkish fez. The answer was: "He belongs to the Landwehr. When the regulation headgear ran out at the depot, the men were given a fez or anything that happened to be there. He has no connection with Bosnia." Imagine a Prussian without the proper military head-piece. He would probably die of shame or make away with himself at once.

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September 10th.

The loss of the second battle of Lemberg is announced. It is said that all the Austrian armies from the neighbourhood of Lemberg and Lublin have been withdrawn to an impregnable position in the rear to be rallied and reinforced. The irresistible Austro-Hungarian offensive, of which there has been so much talk hitherto, is over. In Berlin, where I am staying on my way back, less boastful speeches and less violent threats against the foes they are going to vanquish show me quite clearly how soon people grow dejected, but they show me also, alas! that it is only from failure, and not from any higher knowledge, as it is called, that any change can be hoped for in Prussia.

September 24th.

For some time I have written no notes and am almost inclined not to continue them. More important than writing is action. But how to act I do not rightly know. In any case I am preparing to begin with myself and, by a sharp stroke of the knife, to sever myself from my post, from my daily work, from which I have long desired to free myself, though hitherto in vain.

Meanwhile, what a change in the situation has occurred on the Western front! A strong French counter-thrust has forced the German armies which were already near Paris to retire. Apparently a

Verdun

gap had been left between the German armies in their too hasty and self-confident advance, and the enemy nearly succeeded in breaking through and enveloping and cutting off a portion. This danger was averted by hard fighting and with heavy losses, but it was only north of Rheims that the retirement came to a standstill. There a battle has now been raging for some days and is still undecided.

Many German troops have been transferred from Alsace and Lorraine to the North of France; consequently the French have again advanced at various points as far as Alsace and Lorraine. Of the bombardment of Nancy, which was announced with so much noise, nothing more is heard. The Crown Prince is still stationed in the Verdun district. Verdun has not yet fallen, but from what I hear its outer forts are being bombarded with the heaviest artillery. All things considered, it no longer looks as if the Germans are going over France "like a roller." The losses on both sides must be absolutely horrible. From the Eastern seats of war scarcely any news has come since Hindenburg's tremendous victory.

The correctness of my feeling that the invasion of Belgium was not only an act of treachery and savagery, but also a piece of stupidity, seems to me confirmed. If Germany had maintained a defensive attitude against France and thrown her

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strength against Russia, she would have been in a better way even from the military point of view. But if it was thought necessary to take the offensive against France, an honest and direct attack against her Western frontier would, as people already see to-day, have been safer than the plan of passing through Belgium.

From the fact that some of our heaviest guns have been brought from Lorraine to Belgium, an expert of my acquaintance concludes that the Germans now desire or are obliged to set about the conquest of Antwerp with energy.

September 25th.

The state of barbarism into which the German Press has fallen is frightful. One has to avoid seeing the contents in many places as one avoids dirty puddles. A hasty glance of disgust is all I give to some papers, like one who daily convinces himself that a loathsome reptile, which he cannot kill, is still in the same spot. Yes, the Press is, as it boasts, really unanimous. May it never be said of the German people that what was given to the world in these times was the free speech of the people through its own organs! The fate of the Germans would be a terrible one if their enemies were victorious and were not then more magnanimous than the German Press is now. Even if I were not able to read the foreign newspapers and

The German Press

judge by comparison, the language of the German papers alone would prove to me that we have sunk lowest of all. I assuredly do not forget that we are kept in a state of siege, that every criticism and every expression of opinion that is not inspired are suppressed by draconian means. But even in Germany newspapers cannot be compelled to bark. They can be silent instead of taking part in the baiting. But no! They even outdo the Government, towards which their compliance knows no bounds. The German Press will never recover from the ignominy with which it has covered itself in this war. After the war we must get a new Press, the present one is a vile leprosy. Germany needs not only a new brain and a new heart, but a new skin.

I cannot but believe that hundreds of thousands share my feeling if they have read any newspapers at all during recent weeks. My reproaches against the Press are based more on its abysmal untruthfulness, injustice, malice and spitefulness than upon its ignorance, want of culture, bad taste, arrogance and coarseness. I will quote a few examples. If Belgium is under discussion "former German friends who know her" can say nothing but what is bad and disgraceful. The population is cowardly, Frenchified, without patriotism, undisciplined, disunited; the King a stupid weakling and stage hero; his appeals to the population are fabrication of

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history and hollow phrases; his Prime Minister a gallomaniac and really a Frenchman, who for years has been playing a traitorous part with the object of handing Belgium over to France. The Queen is unworthy of her forefathers because she fled to England. A certain sympathy can still be assured to her if she sets herself free from the English Court, because the Crown Prince of Bavaria is her brother-in-law and the Prussian Crown Prince was her friend. Not a voice is raised lamenting the tragic fate of Belgium, pronouncing her misfortunes undeserved, or leaving her some good qualities; not a voice to appeal for clemency and charity, to urge that all are not responsible for the transgressions of some, to plead that the country be not dismembered and despoiled. Not a voice inviting to serious consideration whether the invasion of Belgium was in accordance with right, unavoidable or even advantageous. No, every newspaper writer is sure without examination that there was no other way than to disregard Belgium; that Belgium first broke her neutrality and ought to have licked the German hand which smote her. The state of siege under which we are living suddenly brings to the front all the venal scoundrels who lend the Government their pens for every deed of shame, as bravos hire their stilettos. The pick of the infamous writers belong to three species. They consist, firstly, of

The German Press

those offensively stupid retired officers who could not be utilised as soldiers even in time of war ; secondly, of clerical dignitaries who, with cold soul and kindly smile, trumpet forth each bit of baseness as an heroic feat of German Protestantism ; and, thirdly, the worst of all, of the countless University professors of the modern type, men overloaded with titles and distinctions, who swim with every patriotic stream, creatures who have been bought or have stolen their way in, who outside their special department seek not truth and thoroughness but the fame of the day. This highly esteemed scum of the three fashionable Prussian circles tries to make history by lying, tries to create "archives" and "data" by impudent assertion. Thus it comes about that one is looked upon with contempt in Germany to-day if one declares it to be improbable and certainly not proved that the French were the first to march into Belgium or that they intended to march in at all. And yet every day brings new proofs to him who is willing to see, that France completely respected Belgian neutrality. But lie on, ye barbarians ! The truth will hurl you into the abyss.

With France the Press cuts the same evil capers. Every French announcement is a lie, every declaration empty phrases. The soldiers fight reluctantly, shoot with dum-dum bullets, devastate and plunder, commit the maddest outrages, and bolt like sheep

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before the German troops. The financial position of the country is pitiable, the Government powerless, the generals are incompetent or are Monarchists and at loggerheads with their English comrades. There is not a spark of reason or justice which impels the German journalist to recognise and honour any good in the enemy. And yet, every now and then, there come over from France calm and appreciative judgments on the German troops, which the German Press welcomes with pride. But this example tempts no one in our country to imitate it, although there are occasions enough at hand. For in this war, at any rate, the French official voice has hitherto always simply and unreservedly told the truth, even when it was hard, whilst the Germans are only capable of truth so long as they are victorious.

Perhaps what most fills one with shame is the inferiority of the German Press in relation to England. Along with much that is stupid and spiteful, the English newspapers contain a great deal that is just and appreciative towards the Germans, while the latter have nothing but vulgar threats, envious scorn and filthy insults for everything English. True, those English utterances which favour Germany to excess are called "courageous, manly words" or "manful deeds," but that is the beginning and the end of German courage and German manfulness as shown in the Press.

The Neutral Press

Of the false imputations made by our newspapers against the Russians and the Eastern nations in general, I will say nothing. . Even in those countries our Press cannot be outdone. Nothing but our good German organisation would be able to invent a new revolution every day, a new sign of weakness, strife and discontent, a new proof of hypocrisy, rottenness and depravity, a new light upon the methods by which our opponents plotted the war. German discipline is necessary if what the stupidest of "our heroic sons" writes home is to be taken for truth, and the declarations of the most highly placed enemy for lies and deception.

To crown its impudence, the German Press proclaims its bungling fictions even to neutral countries as the pure truth, and calls upon neutrals to defend them. An indignant refusal is echoed back from the neutral Press, which says rightly that we are the people who publish nothing but cheap bombast and glorification of ourselves ; that we either kill foreign views with silence or comment on them maliciously, unless they promise to serve us as seconds in the duel ; that humanity, moderation and justice are never mentioned in our papers, only senseless accusations, horrible threats and appeals to have no scruples and show no mercy. When German scholars send vile papers like the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten* to Swiss professors "for the

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sake of truth," it is clear enough how utterly the Germans fail to understand what Europe already is and will remain.

Everywhere now the German Government has its emissaries whose mission it is not to convince, but to bribe the newspapers of neutral countries so that they may write in a manner favourable to Germany. Every one in Germany refuses to believe that there is any more effective means than bribery. A well-known Catholic member of the Reichstag is doing dirty work for our Government in this respect also, and it is organised on a great scale. Moreover, he writes articles of his own, which, it is said, are afterwards disseminated by means of Government money. For instance, I recall an article by him which, without any attempt at justification or proof, began by asserting that the French had meant to violate Swiss neutrality and had demanded a passage through Switzerland to Germany, but had been deterred by the Swiss mobilisation which was directed solely against France. Those who do not believe this should read it in *Der Tag*.

September 26th.

As I have already mentioned, the Germans try to explain their unpopularity as due to their not having bribed the foreign Press sufficiently. (N.B. *bribed*—not, let us say, enlightened or encouraged.)

Faith in Bribery

So far as foreign countries are concerned the German mind paints a very simple picture of the world. Even high politics are now to be conducted in the same simple manner. Where the intelligence of diplomatists failed, the donkey with the sacks of gold is to succeed. When the Foreign Office and the Army men have no private channels of their own, they inquire whether the great business firms have confidential agents abroad to slip into the pockets of the leading foreign statesmen the millions required to produce a change in their sentiments. It is assumed without hesitation that not only the Press but the Ministers of the States which are still neutral have been bribed by the opposite side, and that all turns on outbidding one's competitors. That anyone should resist a bait, if only it be made big enough, and prefer an independent, honest policy in his country's interests, no longer seems credible. I could say much about these machinations, which I have long detested, but will to-day confine myself to pointing out how abominable it would be if, as the result of large sums of money flowing into the pockets of dishonest servants of the State, whole nations were really to be sacrificed and, so to speak, hired out for service in war. Would there ever be an historian who could explore and bring proof of these motives?

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September 29th.

For weeks there have been only quite laconic, colourless announcements from the theatres of war. It is impossible to picture the true position. The official reports completely fail us, obviously because successes fail us. The Germans are really a good-natured folk, born to obey blindly and humbly to refrain from thinking, else they would not put up with this long silence, broken only by a few contradictory, disconnected utterances. But no question is heard ; in spite of all the anxiety no one dares to put one. That things don't look pleasant at Main Headquarters I know from what I have been told by gentlemen who have been received there by the Kaiser. I will not, however, go into the differences. This much is certain : the German Supreme Command, perhaps also the leaders of the Army, had ceased to believe that the French would offer serious resistance in the neighbourhood of Paris, and had not reckoned with the hostile army which suddenly threw them back. It is characteristic that in our official *communiqués* this retreat was called "a temporary withdrawal on tactical grounds of our right wing in the neighbourhood of Paris." Numerous military experts have explained to us with a superior smile the amazingly clever trap thus set for the French : the armies on the frontier of Alsace and Lorraine would now fall on the rear of the French troops,

Suppression of *Vorwärts*

which had advanced northwards. The grandiloquent announcement of the bombardment of Nancy in presence of the Kaiser seemed at the same time to indicate that, in the hope of other rapid successes, a virtue was being made out of the necessity of retreat. No more, however, is heard of Nancy. One of the barrier-forts (Camp des Romains) has indeed fallen, but it has not come to any real crossing of the Marne. Beyond all question, the present position of our front in France is dictated to us by the French.

To-day we read that the bombardment of Antwerp has begun. I know from private but reliable sources that this question caused a good deal of vacillation and discussion at Headquarters, till it was at length decided to turn the 42-cm. guns on Antwerp.

There are increasing signs that after a long pause another battle with the Russians is approaching. This time Austrians and Germans will co-operate.

A few days ago the Military Governor of the Province of Brandenburg suppressed till further notice the Social-Democrat organ *Vorwärts*. People will be amazed at the reasons given for this measure. They are that *Vorwärts* published an article which, in discussing the causes of the outbreak of war, showed sympathetic understanding (though with

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many reservations) of the conduct of our opponents, while the innocence of the German Government was only admitted in a hesitating, half-hearted manner. Also it was urged in the article that the proletariat must continue to struggle, after the war, with renewed energy for the progress of humanity and the human race.

When one of the leading German newspapers, because it dares to breathe a word of criticism and express an independent opinion, is simply suspended without warning and without any previous conviction, no one can any longer doubt that it is a disgrace to be a German subject. What should we have to expect if the war ended victoriously and a new spirit were struggling for expression? Kicks and stones instead of bread, scorn instead of thanks or fulfilment of the promise to recognise no more party distinctions. How can these men have the audacity to keep on pointing to the unity of German thought and utterance—thus making the people appear responsible, in the enemy's eyes, for their own incapable and criminal policy, and so abandoning them to universal execration—when in the whole of Germany not a single word may be printed or spoken for which the Government has not given the cue?

Lately, so we have read, the Reichstag Deputy Liebknecht was going to give a lecture at Stuttgart on the craze for annexations—a most legitimate and

Rheims Cathedral

meritorious project, considering the mad schemes of subjugation which obsessed German minds, especially while the first German onrush lasted. The lecture was summarily vetoed. The student of German political freedom at the beginning of the twentieth century will recall these incidents. Prussia—Russia : which shows best on comparison ?

A sensation even greater than that caused by the burning of Louvain convulsed the world a few days ago on the report that German troops had bombarded the Cathedral of Rheims and in great part destroyed it. The German explanation is that the tower of the Cathedral was used as a post of observation. The French Government denies this. No doubt it is another instance of the hallucinations from which soldiers and their leaders so frequently suffer. Even if the German version were correct, it would be far from excusing them. It is very significant that the Germans persuade themselves that if the French had come to Cologne they would have burnt down Cologne Cathedral.

A correspondent relates in one of the papers what ingenuous hopes the soldiers build on the person of the aged General Häsel, whom they expect to work miracles. He has vanished somewhere with 40,000 men, is having underground passages dug leading to a great fortress, and

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will suddenly bob up with his warriors right inside the fortress itself. The popular correspondent gathered from this story that Häselér has become a supernatural and mythical figure even in his lifetime. I cannot help shaking my head at the simplicity of our soldiers, and remember having read not long ago that this old ruffian Häselér, who, it was notorious, had no command, had still ridden out on patrol in person and brought in one whole live soldier as prisoner ! There is a suggestion of senile decay and second childhood, a flavour of unsated bloodthirstiness, in this piece of information. I picture him, the worn-out veteran, playing with his soldiers like an imbecile with a doll. His whole life has been devoted to the disposition of armies and to the drafting of plans of battle : and now that war has come, he is too old for an active part.

October 4th.

A gentleman of importance in military circles has just returned from a journey to Main Headquarters. He has also visited the theatre of war in Lorraine and the district round Antwerp. He affirms that in the direction of Toul and Verdun there are now very few German troops. The public is in error if it believes, on the authority of uncontradicted official news, that the struggle for the crossing

The French Field Gun

of the Meuse and the fall of Verdun is still being zealously pursued. On the other hand, the siege of Antwerp is being continued with vigour; the Germans have only a few divisions there, but a great many heavy guns. It is also alleged that the Germans near Rheims are again so far advanced that they could easily break through, if they had not strict injunctions to keep quiet till the new line of battle towards the coast has been established.

At Main Headquarters, my informant added, the Kaiser appears daily only for a very short time. Field-Marshal General von Moltke is somewhat listless and apathetic, the real power and coming man is now the War Minister, von Falkenhayn, who is supported by some efficient staff officers. There is simply an enormous number of high and all-highest personages at Headquarters, which have now been moved from Luxembourg to Mezières. The expenditure of munitions has surpassed all expectations. The question of munition supplies is causing great anxiety. I will not reproduce here all the technical details given me by my informant, but the following point appears to be worthy of mention. The French field guns are universally admired and acknowledged to be superior to the German. It is most fortunate, he said, that the French artillery ammunition is bad. The superiority of the French field gun is a striking proof of French ability, for it dates from the year

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1896, whereas the German gun was introduced nearly ten years later.

My informant—who, I may remark, is a very military-minded gentleman—also told me, as others had done before him, that the German soldiers put no restraint on their propensity to plunder and have become pretty brutal. He himself had seen part of the town of Malines looted by the soldiers of various regiments. The houses were broken into with the butt-ends of rifles; objects which could not be destroyed there and then were carried away on wheelbarrows. Officers as well as men took part in the looting. At the instigation of my informant gendarmes were placed on guard at the houses of that quarter of the town, but it was already much devastated.

October 5th.

In some slight degree the appallingly vulgar abuse of the German Press has abated during the last few days. Not because it has begun to be ashamed of itself, but because it has had to wait too long for news of fresh victories, and its abominable lust for patriotic incendiarism is thus running short of fuel. It is probably beginning to fear lest part of its own recipe for the treatment of the enemy may, under certain circumstances, be applied to the Germans themselves. The papers have often enough bellowed at our adversaries "The

Bavarian Soldiers

World-War is God's Judgment." But this saying will come true in another sense.

Of late it has been the order of the day to praise the Bavarian soldiers. They are said to be especially terrible in battle, going for the enemy with bayonet or butt-end of rifle without the least fear of the devastating machine-gun, and choosing rather to kill than to take prisoners. As a Bavarian, I cannot, of course, rejoice at this news. What do these Bavarians know about the cause of the war, or on which side the guilt lies? Who threatened them? What have they in common with the ideas and interests which have led to the intolerable position of Germany in Europe? What do they know of their adversaries? When have they ever had to complain of unfriendliness on the part of any of their present foes? What do they know of their enemy's code of right and morality? What indeed do they know about international usages at all? The old Bavarian Highlanders who are so much belauded (and to whom I do not belong) are a hardy, rough, mostly good-natured folk of peasants and mountaineers, who blindly respond to the call of the drum in time of war like many other tribes of German stock, though perhaps they show a more than ordinary zest in obeying the command to use their fists, to plunder and murder, because they are more than ordinarily ignorant and

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more than ordinarily indifferent as to the causes that have brought them suddenly face to face with an enemy. Are these people, solely devoted to their native place, conscious whether good or evil instincts have been awakened in their breasts by the bugle call? Certainly not. Their present actions are just as much governed by ignorance and superstition as their political likings and animosities have so often been in former times. They are now just beginning to admire Prussia and its King, at a moment when both have lost the last shred of sympathy and respect throughout the world. As once Prussia was the hereditary enemy, so now, equally without any reason, it is France. If the beautiful Bavarian country had preserved its political isolation in the same way as Switzerland, the Bavarian population could long ago have started on the road to real progress and enlightenment. There was no lack of good guiding stars. The grandiose and boundless questions over which other nations tear each other to pieces have next to no significance for this small inland country—small, but endowed with ample vitality of its own. Its natural instincts would be to live in peace and friendship with all its neighbours. Evil association with Prussia, however, has brought it to such a pass that we now read of Bavarians being the greatest terror in battle. “They take off their coats in order to lay about them more freely; they

Alleged Russian Atrocities

cut down all before them with their long pocket knives; they give no quarter and for that reason are now to be put in face of the English troops." Our newspapers actually relate that a Frenchman has claimed the right of France to use black troops against Germany, because Germany has let loose the Bavarians on France. Everyone interprets this little story as a compliment to the Bavarians, of which they may well be proud. And this is what these home-loving, contented, essentially healthy and sturdy little people have come to!

I hear at first hand that the Commission of Inquiry into the Russian atrocities in East Prussia, with the Minister of the Interior and Governor of the Province at the head, has come back without having arrived at any satisfactory results. It obtained, it seems, evidence only of the diseased and inflamed imagination of its compatriots, and failed to authenticate a single one of the reported outrages. This is of sufficient importance to go into further.

We were given the most blood-curdling particulars of Russian inhumanity. The public credulously accepted these accounts, no matter how ghastly they might be. For instance, it was said and believed that the Russian soldiers used to nail the hands of little peasant children to the table. In Germany the Russian soldier is regarded as a

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veritable beast of prey, for whose sheer brutality, shameless cruelty, and lust for destruction no parallel is to be found in any other race. I have always hesitated to believe that this was a true picture of all, or even of most, Russians. On the basis of varied impressions received in Russia itself, I have imagined the Russian soldier to be, occasionally, perhaps even more devoid of independent judgment and even more excitable than the German soldier, but—if anything—more gentle, good-natured and unselfish than the latter. Of course, in the case of the Russians one is dealing with a mixture of many and very different breeds, but I found that my estimate was confirmed by the minute delineations of native character in the works of the great Russian novelists and by journalistic reports of the intellectual movements in all parts of Russia. If the criticism of the Russian soldier be reduced to this—that he blindly follows his leader, I am bound to confess that these leaders, whatever their shortcomings, seem to me far superior to ours in honourable, manly feeling and in ideals of nobility and justice.

I cannot describe my feelings when I now hear on reliable authority that the Russians have not committed a single offence against international law. The Commission has made known (not publicly, of course) that the general behaviour of the Russians has been even less unscrupulous than was

Reports Proved False

to have been expected from an invader. The people and local authorities frequently expressed themselves in terms of praise and gratitude when speaking to the Commission about the conduct of the Russians.

Germans, pause and think and be ashamed of yourselves! In your blind servility you are becoming a common danger. We were told that whole towns had been looted and sacked by the Russians, and their inhabitants murdered. But now the mayors of these German towns are themselves publishing evidence of the good behaviour of the Russian troops during their occupation. We were told that all the foresters of the Rominter Heath—i.e. about 50 men—had been shot by order of a Russian General. The foresters are alive and know nothing about such a crime being attempted. We were told that a Russian General was dragged in chains before a Court-Martial for having ordered his soldiers to do certain things involving a breach of international law. Even the very wording of his order was published. This accusation too, like all the rest, has vanished into thin air, leaving behind it nothing but our own slanders, abuse and threats. We try to extricate ourselves by mean subterfuges, as for example:—

“In order to make a good impression on the Prussian population, the Russian soldiers and commanders have not wrought such havoc as was

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to be expected in view of their usual behaviour." Then, for heaven's sake, make a similar "good impression" yourselves! For heaven's sake, employ the same methods to win over the hostile population yourselves, and I will gladly credit you with having done it out of kindness and not (like the Russians) from mere expediency. But what of the behaviour of Hindenburg's troops, when they won their victory over the Russians? This is the story passing from mouth to mouth "The enemy had been driven into the swamps, but that was not enough. Tens of thousands, who wanted to surrender and tried to climb out of the morass, were again and again pushed back by the bayonet till they were suffocated or drowned. The word of command was that no quarter should be given, too many prisoners would be a nuisance at home!" For days and nights, it is said, the screams of the drowning men were heard. So piercing were their cries that they were heard above the cannon's roar, and many who were forced to listen to this shrieking chorus of despair went out of their minds.

Ninety thousand prisoners were taken in that battle, but it is supposed that even more, far more, were murdered while helplessly imploring succour. I have no reliable means of testing the truth of this story, but all say that it really happened; and not one has a word of pity to waste

No Quarter

on the incident. Each, on the contrary, approves of it and says it was the only proper course to take. And such a state of mind seems to me more important than whether or not the rumour is true. Only to-day a journalist and officer—only a subaltern, but typical in his way of thinking—said to me: “I hear that, so far as possible, no more quarter is being given. And quite right, too! We already have to keep two or three hundred thousand prisoners, who are a burden and danger to the country. It would be far better if they had been killed at once on the battlefield. The more quickly we destroy the flower and strength of the hostile nations, the sooner the war will be decided and our mastery assured.” The fellow uttered these sentiments with the familiar German childlike smile and calm gaze of blue eyes. He himself, at any rate, would willingly shoot prisoners. No further considerations trouble him—not even the fact that the enemy might kill his prisoners too. For, you see, we have more prisoners than the enemy!

October 6th.

To-day I saw another forecast, such as I have often seen before, of the future readjustment of Europe in the event of our victory. I begin now to collect these ludicrous documents, but with

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no intention of wasting any words on them here. Nevertheless, if one of these days I should come across anyone in Germany whose voice is raised on behalf of Justice, Humanity, or Progress (of a non-material kind) after the war or after our victory, I will mention the fact here with pride and record his views in full, even if he be an insignificant and unknown person. I will hail him as the first European in Germany. Unfortunately, however, the numerous demands which breathe a spirit of cupidity and violence issue without exception from the most influential and fashionable circles. No wonder that Germany has not a friend outside the country; she deserves none. To speak frankly, such an outside friend would be a suspicious individual, a friend of materialism, lies and bribery.

I have just read, too, a copy of a correspondence between two Germans whose opinions carry great weight. In it they discuss the hostile attitude of the people and Press of Holland, and recommend, as the only effective means of changing this hostile feeling into something of the opposite kind, that money be expended far and wide and on the most lavish scale. These large sums of money, they suggest, might in the meantime be advanced by the Foreign Office out of the funds of the war exchequer and afterwards refunded out of war indemnities. The self-assurance with which this

Bribery in Holland

suggestion is made, and the way in which it is treated as a matter of course, stagger even me—and I have become accustomed to a great deal. The personage to whom the proposal is addressed replies, it is true, that he believes that with a certain section of the Dutch people this method, which he has employed with great success in Belgium, Italy and Roumania, and recommended to others, would be less effectual than kind words ; but he goes on to say that he has discussed this valuable hint with the Foreign Office and ascertained that already in Holland, as in other countries, emissaries from the Foreign Office, provided with ample funds, are seeking the goal in question.

If with the victory of German arms, German methods also remain victorious, what a brilliant picture of the future we may paint for ourselves, what an ideal state of morality we may anticipate !

October 24th.

For weeks I have made no more entries. Goaded by an intolerable restlessness, I have been away visiting relations and friends. But my despair has not lessened ; we could give each other no comfort. Nearly all have been gripped by the War-machine. Even the few who struggle against it see no escape from “ doing their bit ” in some form or other. They feel obliged to help

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by taking up some "innocent" form of war-work, by finding humble occupation in some subordinate post—because, after all, one can't just do nothing, one must try to alleviate the misery, one is impotent before the hurricane, etc. Among those who are of no use for any war purpose, the majority have saved themselves from spiritual shipwreck by letting the current of the day bear them along; and the few that are left—those who, lamenting, stand aloof and have remained awake to the great calamity of the time—only add to my helpless distress. The isolation of anyone still in possession of his powers, and anxious to do something, is terrible. The hiss of hate chokes back his words. Overwhelmed by the pandemonium he shuts his eyes; he can neither flee nor die. The whirlwind deprives him of breath and vision.

After all, what is there for me to write? I do not feel guilty of any serious sin of omission in not having written. I could only have repeated fresh examples of the wretched, unalterable facts I have already recorded. Little has changed at the theatres of war. Antwerp, to be sure, has fallen long ago. But this event will contribute little towards an early termination of the War. The Belgian troops are still making the same desperate resistance to the German advance from the north. Battles in the neighbourhood of Lille are constantly

Suspense in Germany

reported, but they are not decisive. Nothing has happened that repairs in the least the wrong done to Belgium, and the longer we insist on oppressing the Belgians and their country, the more grave and terrific the struggle becomes.

One might almost say that the tension and suspense of the last two months among our people has developed into a kind of collapse. After the vigorous advance in August, the standstill of all operations on a large scale through September and October seems to them something uncanny. But the ravings of the Press try to stifle this feeling. May the course of events so run that our people's presumptuous pride is followed first by collapse and then by a return to sanity!

In the East too the great decisive battles, of which men have been talking for weeks past, have not yet begun.

Already the men of the "Landsturm" are being called up on a large scale and got on the road to the seats of war. A vast number of volunteers are now in training; and they are still coming forward in far greater numbers than is necessary—that is to say, it is impossible to find uniforms for, or to drill, anything like all of them.

While I was travelling I once more saw for myself what a prisoners' camp is like. Half -

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grown boys and quite old, feeble men in peasants' dress were sitting side by side on a long wooden form, and I shall never forget the dreary hopelessness of their expression. Why had these forlorn human creatures been brought hither? What crime had they committed that, if they were not to be killed, they could not be set free?

Close at hand, a battalion of elderly troops was drilling under the command of elderly, decrepit, clumsy officers. The drill appeared to me as stupid and amateurish as it could be. When one looks at these men, one cannot imagine them making better soldiers than their enemies. Most of the troops and their reserve officers seem as awkward in body as they are in mind. Nearly all of them have only gone into training once in their lives, i.e. when they were compelled to do so during their time of military service. Before and after, they were steeped in that well-known lethargy which forms so large a part of the "easy-going" German temperament and produces the familiar figure of the German male. The man whose profession calls for no physical exercise does not take any; for every German becomes entirely absorbed in the special routine of his calling, and toils on mechanically till the clockwork runs down. Most of the reserve officers have kept their old military uniforms as the insignia of their social position and political views, in the same way as the student

Germans not Warlike by Nature

keeps his old Corps-colours, without continuing to cultivate their military knowledge and abilities.

I should never have believed it possible for them to take up the military game in earnest once more and actually to train troops. Even now, in spite of all that is happening, I cannot yet persuade myself that the Germans are by nature a warlike people. That they like to squeeze their bloated, prematurely-flabby bodies into uniforms is surely no proof of a natural talent for war. They have always seemed to me like asses eager to don the lion's skin and encouraging one another to believe that the rest of the world is peopled only with disguised asses like themselves. Should the Germans, however, really prove themselves the better men in the present war, I should account for this paradoxical result by the reflection that it is just the most stupid and clumsy people who win a war, if only they be willing to sacrifice their intelligence to carry out the most primitive movements—which, however ludicrous in an individual, are imposing in a crowd—and to continue to execute them until released by death or the word of command.

One of our best-known financiers spoke to me in the train. As this gentleman's "moderate" views rather surprised me, I will record them here. For he is the first responsible German I have met

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who wishes to deal gently with France. His idea is that we must come to terms with France before we can settle accounts with England. "All" he wanted from France was the surrender of a few important districts near the frontier, e.g. Longwy and Briey for the sake of their mineral wealth. On the other hand, he was ready to give France most of Belgium, including Brussels and Ostend; while Germany was to retain only Liège and Antwerp, with a strip of connecting territory. The Dutch, who would have to surrender Maestricht and their territory on the Scheldt, were to be offered ample compensation in the shape of the province of Limburg. Binding treaties, establishing a sort of tariff-union (though with certain reservations), would have to be concluded simultaneously with both France and Holland—not, of course, with Belgium, for that would have been already partitioned. He did not doubt that we should be able to reach an agreement of this kind with both France and Holland; it was only a question of bringing the necessary diplomatic skill to bear as soon as impending events in the Western theatre of war should have given the Germans another great victory. The present Imperial Chancellor and the present Foreign Secretary were, he thought, not well fitted for such a task. He was inclined to regard Delbrück (the Minister) as the cleverest of all our statesmen; but he also

Soldiers' Tales

thought very highly of Tirpitz, the Secretary of State for the Navy.

Once, too, during my journey, I found myself in the same compartment with half a dozen wounded soldiers, all belonging to different regiments. One of them had been discharged as unfit for service when Lunéville was evacuated. He was inconsolable because he had missed the great march through Belgium into France ; he would so much have liked to see those districts as well. Another, who had lost the sight of one eye, was heartily glad that he was going home and would be free from military service for good and all. A third told us that he had been lying in the trenches for three weeks, enduring hardships and hunger, and blessed the bullet that was sending him home. A fourth related, amidst the applause of the other wounded, in an artless, roguish way, how they had looted closed houses and jewellers' shops, and set fire to villages directly " things had not been to their liking ; " how they had got food from the people by force, and yet for whole days together had nothing to eat. Only in one house they had not stolen anything, for on the floor there was a corpse in a coffin, and beside it an old woman, also dead. It looked as if a funeral had been interrupted. Another boasted of the violence of the German attack. They were not

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to be restrained so soon as they came within a couple of hundred yards of the French. The latter had always surrendered at once by holding the butt-end of their rifles high in the air. The English were more difficult to seize. The last youth, fresh-complexioned and modest, had only trivial experiences of war to relate. He distinguished himself to his advantage from his travelling companions, who were mostly sinister-looking fellows, with an ugly-sounding laugh. It is true that our patriots say you can see from the first glance that our soldiers are incapable of perpetrating outrages and murder. But what they really mean is shown by their jubilation over the "just punishment" meted out with "righteous berserk fury" to Belgian towns and villages.

One and all of these six men congratulated themselves quite frankly on having escaped the perils and hardships of war with a mere scratch. As our newspapers pretend that all the wounded are longing to return to the Front, their correspondents must, to say the least, be guilty of a deliberate credulity. Soldiers like to brag, and adapt their conversation to the anticipations of their listeners. For the most part they find themselves encouraged to talk of deeds of extreme valour, of "dashing exploits." But if anyone adopts towards them a purely human and earnest tone, that gives them moral courage. They quickly

“Hero-Incense”

confess their war weariness. The six young brigands in question, who discerned my sympathy and pity, obviously preferred my overtures to the advances of other passengers who accosted them in the usual bluff manner and offered them “hero-incense”—the name given to soldiers’ tobacco to-day in Germany. Whatever the six had done, they were not to blame, for they knew no better. The limits of their rights and duties had never been pointed out to them. Who was there to teach them? In their homes, at school, in barracks, while training, there had been nobody who had taken the trouble to awaken in them a higher humanity or a sense of freedom. They had been commanded and learnt to obey. Even when they may have struggled inwardly against evil, they could not give expression to their better feelings, because there was no one to help them to an understanding of their own conscience; they remained sullenly silent, confused and suspicious, and ended by obeying in every thought and action the commands and prohibitions of those above them.

While I was away I also looked up a German Professor of International Law, who remembered me quite well from my old University days. Even this man seemed to me to have altered for the worse, and was decidedly inclined to force his

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science into harmony with the actions of the German military and political leaders. I told him it was deplorable that the science he taught had remained a sealed book in Germany, so that at most one or two contemptible upstarts of lawyers at the Foreign Office had a barren knowledge of the subject. Yet international law should be known to all classes of the people. It was particularly important that members of the military profession should be thoroughly acquainted with it, but it was just here that there was total ignorance, even among the leaders; and if a few of them knew the necessary elements of the subject, that was because their own hearts told them, not because they had mastered the science. He owned, indeed, that I was right in this, and cited a number of cases that he was investigating, in which certain newspapers and officers had treated the general public to an exposition of the most narrow-minded, dangerous, and erroneous theories on the subject of international law. He admitted that the rules for the behaviour of an invading force in the enemy's country ought to be inculcated upon soldiers of all ranks, and that this was a more important part of their training than physical drill. He did not consider it enough that the soldiers should be given a leaflet with printed instructions to carry with them, as has been done of late. But I was going too far

Artists and Authors

for him when I remarked that we had so much on our conscience in this war already that our reputation as a people of culture was entirely ruined.

The idiotic, vulgar recriminations between artists and authors continue. Every day there are fresh and more revolting instances. First, a foreign painter, because he signed a manifesto, is expelled from every German art club; next, a German author hurls his patriotic mud at the head of a foreign colleague of the pen and former friend. The resolve never in future to buy, exhibit, praise or notice a foreign book or work of art is reiterated *ad nauseam*. It is perpetually being resented on our side as a specially galling grievance that foreigners should ever have been popular or had a good market for their wares in Germany. May we not safely say that the world has gone mad when it thinks the artist bound to create out of gratitude to his public, and not for the sake of expressing his own ideals? If the guardians of the "true, the beautiful, the good" can give voice only to crazy words of hatred, to whom are we poor crushed and benighted drudges to look for enlightenment? The man who composed the "Hymn of Hate," which is circulating among us to-day, is at most the grotesque caricature of a poet.

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October 25th.

I have had a visit from a respected and well-informed Dutch merchant who has many connections with Germany and whose wife is German. He laid stress on the desire of Holland to remain neutral whatever happens ; but declared quite frankly that there is in Holland no sympathy with the cause of Germany. Our conduct towards Belgium has set a gulf between German and Dutch ways of thinking that cannot be bridged. When he himself attempts to defend the Germans, he often gets questions and answers with which he is entirely unable to deal. Germany is far more feared than England. The Dutch fear above everything German machinations in the event of a German victory. Holland does not want any negotiations with Germany in respect to rectifications of frontier. She would not give up either Maestricht or the mouth of the Scheldt, however much land the Germans might offer her in compensation. The province of Zeeland has always been Dutch ; the Belgian province of Limburg, on the contrary, has nothing to do with Holland. The Dutch detest the thought that in the twentieth century the political allegiance of such territories should still be transferred from Power to Power by a process of bargaining. They are well aware that Germany, if she keeps Antwerp, will want to get rid of the Dutch power of barring the entrance to this town ; but this is

Dutch and English

a matter about which Holland will not consent to bargain. The Dutch want to keep what belongs to them and have no desire that Germany should make them a present of anything in addition. People say in Holland: "What once was ours in Belgium we have parted with and don't regret it. If we had set any value on it, we could have tried ourselves to keep it or get it back. It is of much more importance to us to preserve our complete independence. We wish to remain Dutch, just as other people remain Swiss. Least of all will we let Germany interfere with us; for German methods of government would appear to our people like so many blows in the face and, what is more, our material interests are not in harmony with Germany's." The Dutch, he pointed out, are inclined to Free Trade; but a tariff-union with Germany would mean Holland's barricading herself against the sea, which she would never dream of doing. Altogether the Dutch mind and methods have more affinity with the English. Have not the English, indeed, redressed what was their grossest crime in the eyes of the Dutch—their attack on the Boers—and added another glorious page to English history by granting the Boers a constitution, which makes them scarcely less independent than they were before and has completely reconciled them to their fate? "Unfortunately," he concluded, "the German Government has not as yet

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shown even the most rudimentary desire to imitate England's policy of live-and-let-live. The cry of the Poles, the Danes, the Alsatians, and now of the Belgians, strings up every nerve and muscle in Holland to a tense pitch of alertness and self-defence."

Yes, my dear Germans, learn before it is too late! No one wants the bleached bones of your prey which you propose to throw to them. No; what everybody wants, what everybody is resolved upon, is to seize you firmly by the scruff of the neck and to exact the penalty for those you have butchered in the vigour and prime of their life. Holland is no more to be lured than France by the bait of a tit-bit of Belgium. Europe has begun to turn to a better religion, but you are still heathens.

October 26th.

The Commander-in-Chief, von Moltke, has resigned his command, on account of ill-health, in favour of the War Minister, von Falkenhayn. But he is already better, the report adds, thereby recognising his illness as a mere pretext. A howl of officially-inspired triumph would have arisen from the German Press if France had been compelled to announce a change in its chief command. Moltke is said to have been faithful to the traditions of his predecessors without contributing any original ideas.

A "Plot against Germany"

So long as Moltke was there, the Kaiser really took the lead. Therefore his resignation amounts to a fiasco of the Kaiser's. The public, after long waiting without news of victory or reverse, expected to hear something a little different from this shuffling of the pack of personages. At Headquarters personal disagreements are now playing a great part. There are many invalids there at the present time and each of them would like the post of doctor.

The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, that is to say, the Government, has recently brought to light a plot in which for years Belgium, France and England have been leagued together against Germany. The documentary evidence of this has been discovered at Antwerp. The Belgian Government has solemnly repudiated the charge, and challenged our Government to publish the documents in question, not piecemeal, but in their entirety. Then the justifiable and purely defensive nature of the understanding with France and England would be clearly demonstrated. I will not go further into the details, but this I will say : the documents, even in the form in which the above-mentioned paper has published them, cannot be so interpreted as to prove what the German Government would like the public to believe. The whole neutral foreign Press has very rightly rejected the calumnies of the

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Prussian official organ. These lies are not only intended to turn wrong *ex post facto* into right, but also to stimulate the war fever among the people. And for this, unfortunately, the Government is clever enough to rely upon the lack of judgment in the German public, whom it has always been more ready to deceive than to educate and enlighten. In any case, these military plans of operation were arranged several years ago, and one cannot say whether they still held good or even if they ever held good. It is certain that they in no way pledged Belgium to any hostile action against us so long as we left her in peace.

October 27th.

The date by which (according to the programme) all France was to have been crushed is long past. They have ceased to tell us that a rapid conquest of France is our only chance of mastering our foes. We are given to understand, instead, that we shall shortly take Dunkirk, Calais and other coast towns. But that will bring us no nearer a decision than before.

The Germans are preparing with enthusiasm for the mastery of the Channel by setting guns along the coast. Experiments have proved that it is possible for a gun of the same bore as that of our 38-cm. naval guns to carry a distance of about

Italy Beginning to Move

50 kilometres,* and there is rejoicing at the prospect of spreading sudden panic far in the interior of England, an achievement which would be regarded as a good joke. Everyone is saying that the Channel is England's vital nerve.

Italy is beginning to seize territory, apparently without regard to friend or foe. In spite of all denials, it is clear that she has already occupied Valona. That this has hitherto provoked no comment on the German side, looks as if we were ready to pay a ransom in order to avoid more serious damage. Before the world-war the occupation of Valona would certainly have been the signal for war between Austria and Italy.

Noteworthy, too, is the Czar's offer to release the Italian-speaking Austrian prisoners in Russia and to return them to Italy, if they will undertake not to fight against Russia again. The Italian Government has declined this offer in a tactfully-worded reply. Though no doubt Russia was largely influenced by the desire of dealing a severe blow to Austria-Hungary, the proposal nevertheless involves the recognition by Russia of the so-called principle of Nationality; and the effect of this recognition will have a far-reaching significance for Europe as well as for Russia herself. A certain feeling of decency towards her old ally, as well as

* About 31 miles.—*Translator.*

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big and little concessions from Austria—which do not, however, affect the main point at issue—will presumably keep Italy from seeking an open rupture just at present. But, in truth, what is inevitable can only be postponed. The Italians will clamour more and more loudly for their “unredeemed territories,” and the Austrian Italians will feel themselves ever more and more irresistibly drawn to the Italian people. There is only one solution—Austria must give up her claim to rule over vast Italian-speaking dominions, or she must prove without any manner of doubt that the population prefers Austrian rule. At a time when even Russia is kindling new light for her alien races, darkness must not continue in Austria-Hungary and Germany. But what these States want to do is to extinguish the light of others.

The death of the old King of Roumania has brought about no immediate change in the attitude of that country. We shall have to wait and see how his nephew, the new king, is going to act. His wife is supposed to be a decided friend of Germany's foes. A Roumanian who conversed with me the other day attached no great importance to the sympathies of the dynasty, maintaining that the Roumanian people will dictate to their monarch what direction his sympathies shall take. That is my own impression too. Even the old King had

Attitude of Roumania

found himself obliged more and more every year to listen to the voice of his people and take his cue from them, rather than they from him. To anyone who has no sincere appreciation of Roumania's aspirations in regard to the Roumanians beyond her frontiers, she will be at best an unwilling friend or a secret enemy. Roumania's present attitude is sufficiently indicated by the fact that for weeks past she has been delaying the transport of war material from Germany to Turkey.

Turkey is formally still neutral. She has arrived, professedly at least, at her projected understanding with Persia and Afghanistan. India and Egypt, on the other hand, appear perfectly quiet. The Japanese are fighting hard for Kiau-Chau and have occupied the German group of islands in the archipelago. In America not a note of uneasiness is to be heard on account of Japan, but a certain *rapprochement* between the United States and China may be on foot.

Our newspapers have published the letter of a German girl to an Englishman. The letter came into the wrong hands by accident. The girl assures the Englishman of her unchanging love. She was always very happy in England, and had learnt much in her intercourse with English society, the memory of which she prizes most

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highly. There are papers which regard it as a scandal that a German girl should make such a confession of love to an enemy of her country at the present time. In consequence it is demanded that the many Englishmen still at large in our midst shall be interned, and that all girls so oblivious of their honour as this one be held up to public obloquy. This stupid, vulgar and brutal view taken by our newspapers is on a par with those denunciations which see nothing but enemies even in the artists and savants of the hostile nations—enemies whose intellectual productions are to be ignored and disdained in favour of those of purely German origin. The girl could have given no surer testimony of her true love. The hurricane of hate that sweeps over the nations is powerless to trouble the depths of her heart.

October 28th.

To-day official news has come that the German and Austrian troops are retreating before strong Russian forces which have crossed the Vistula.

In the West the Germans have nowhere advanced. To make up for the lack of other successes, the Crown Prince of Bavaria is taking to braggadocio, and giving the world an opportunity of learning how purblind and cynical his mental outlook is. He is now stationed with his army between Nieuport and Dixmude, and therefore has

The Bavarian Crown Prince

gone a long way round since the days when he was waiting near Lunéville to begin his advance into France. This prince, who is the brother-in-law of the Queen of the Belgians, has issued, on Belgian soil, an Army Order congratulating his men on their good fortune in that they are now called upon to fight against English troops. England, he says, has the whole guilt of this war on her shoulders: his troops must now exact remorseless retribution from England for the disaster she has brought on the world. This barbarous harangue ends with the phrase "Up and at them," and its whole tone is hardly worthy of a sergeant-major. "Give no quarter" is plainly implied, and it is a direct incitement to savagery. The English Generals addressed their troops in a very different tone: "Do your duty . . . make your name honoured as Englishmen . . . conduct yourselves with decency, etc." The Bavarian harangue, on the other hand, gives not a hint of the limits a soldier should set to his actions, although the call for retribution surely needed some explanatory qualifications. In any case, of course, it would remain a disgrace to all Bavarians that their Crown Prince should, on that spot, have alluded to retribution. No wonder if, after this barbarous outpouring on the part of a royal prince, our enemies credit us even with outrages we have not committed: no wonder if

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the whole world's suspicion of us should revive. The fact that this Army Order has been issued will make even the false charges against us seem credible.

October 29th.

To-day's sensation is the conduct of the Boers in South Africa. Hitherto we have been forced to believe that any dangerous rising of the Boers against England was out of the question, although it was known that a few of the Boers had refused to fight against the German Colonial troops and a Colonel Maritz had actually rebelled. To-day, however, we learn that Generals Christian de Wet and Beyers have led a great rising in the Orange Free State and Transvaal, and that the Prime Minister, General Botha, has received orders to exercise his full force to quell his rebellious compatriots.

The Greek Government has communicated to the Powers that Greece must, from motives of security, again occupy Epirus, but will respect Valona as an Italian sphere of influence. Italy and Greece appear thus to be aiming at peaceful co-operation. It would be a decided step forward in Europe if Italy were to recognise that the Greeks have a right to aspirations corresponding to those she herself cherishes for her unredeemed provinces. It would undoubtedly be to the advantage of both

Turkey's Intervention

countries, and as certainly do no harm to either of them.

October 30th.

To-day's surprise is the important news that Turkey has decided to take an active part in the war. This resolution coincides with the announcement that England has proclaimed the annexation of Egypt. Meanwhile the Turkish fleet has begun to bombard several Russian ports in the Black Sea. The destruction of some Russian ships is also reported by telegram. Very great satisfaction prevails in Germany. Enver Pasha's army is expected to invade Egypt as early as December.

Turkey's attack on Russia gives rise to fears of a further extension of the conflagration. It will be in the interest of Greece as well as of Italy to put a check on Turkey. A decided step on the part of Italy will probably strengthen Roumania's intention to intervene in the course of events. Nevertheless, so long as Bulgaria keeps quiet, there is hope of holding Roumania and Greece in check.

Lately the Government has let it be understood that its declaration that we would continue to respect the political independence of Holland after the war has had an excellent effect on Holland, and appreciably increased the feeling of confidence

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in Germany. On the other hand, the foreign papers say that the declaration has created a contrary impression, because Germany emphasised at the same time the necessity of an economic *rapprochement*. As a result people in Holland had become more anxious than ever.

Since it is at present a fundamental dogma of Germany that her neighbours must be economically attached to her, the statements of the foreign Press are probably correct. This much is certain—the Dutch are no less averse than Germany's other neighbours from an economic union with her, because they have not the same interests as Protectionist Germany, and because they fear that out of the economic might arise a political dependence. That innumerable writers have hastened to report to their Press the economic intentions of the Germans has, like much else, done us a great deal of harm abroad. But Germans will neither heed nor believe this. Their propagandist agencies have flooded neutral countries with expositions of their economic views, in the hope, it must be supposed, of making a favourable impression. Oh, the folly of all our foreign propaganda! Had the Germans only kept silence, the difficulties of their position might perhaps have aroused a certain sympathy for them in neutral countries, where their true character would have been either unknown or forgotten. But, as it is, they are determined to

Hostages

conduct and to win a Press campaign as well as a military one, and to achieve this object they have to speak. But the moment they speak, their last friend turns his back upon them, shuddering at the coarseness of mind and presumption they betray.

November 1st.

What authority is there in international law for the deportation of harmless families from a hostile country as hostages? We have frequently read that the French have dragged countless so-called "hostages" out of the villages of Alsace-Lorraine. Swiss newspapers, too, criticize the practice. To me it appears absolutely senseless, even if it be according to the law of nations. At any rate, must not these people be set free directly the districts they come from are evacuated by the enemy?

It really deserves to be recorded here that I have met for the first time a German captain of industry (a South German by birth, it is true) who refuses to join in the infatuated campaign of hatred to which the Germans are every day committing themselves more and more deeply. He condemned the resignations from scientific institutions, the sending back of distinctions and diplomas, and the corresponding expulsions of foreigners; and he also condemned our indiscriminate abuse of foreign

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nations. He admitted to me quite calmly that the war was the work of a handful of men on whom history will pronounce judgment, even if only in the course of years; and that, when that time comes, all Germans who have helped the criminal ringleaders to stir up hatred between the nations will stand condemned and disgraced. This conversation gave me great satisfaction and encouragement. However, on my proposing that we should issue a manifesto exhorting to moderation, my consoler declined to be a party to it, on the ground that such a proceeding was impossible in Germany. We should not only be overwhelmed with insults for our pains, but should be prejudicing the interests of the great industries whose prosperity it was our duty as directors to promote.

I would recommend anyone who still entertains any doubts about the real intentions of Belgium on the outbreak of war, to read the Belgian Grey Book which has just appeared. Shame to him who, after comparing it with the German pronouncements on the subject, should still declare that Belgium was in treaty with our adversaries, or that France intended to march through Belgium! Double shame to him who cannot feel compassion for this ill-used country; and threefold shame to him who says that Belgium ought to have consented to the pas-

Belgium and Germany

sage of the German troops, and could have done so without sacrificing her honour !

The case of Belgium is so manifest that it appears to me almost superfluous to adduce any further evidence from my own personal observations. I will, however, indicate a few of them here. For years Belgium had drawn almost all her munitions exclusively from Germany, while she had been in close dependence and co-operation with Germany with regard to the designs and actual manufacture of such munitions as she undertook to make herself. Thus the 28-cm. guns for the defence of Antwerp were ordered in Germany. By the beginning of 1914 these guns had long been ready, and had been taken out of the workshop and paid for. But the fortifications of Antwerp were not sufficiently advanced to enable the guns to be mounted. The Belgian Government begged that they might in the meantime be retained at the factory. For various reasons this request was only unwillingly granted, and the Belgian Government was repeatedly asked (the last time shortly before the war) to take the guns away. But the Belgian Government always renewed its request and even offered to pay for storage. When war broke out these valuable guns were confiscated by the Prussian War Office and made use of. It stands to reason that, if the Belgian Government had been harbouring evil designs against Germany or expecting an attack

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from her, it would have acted differently. Another example on the same lines is that, a few months before the outbreak of war, the Belgian Government entered into extensive agreements with the largest German firm of munition-makers not only for the delivery of a new kind of ammunition through this firm, but also for the manufacture of the same in Belgium, and induced the great Belgian firm of Cockerill to make similar most important agreements with the German firm. Even after the outbreak of war, a letter arrived from Cockerill announcing a remittance of a million francs as an instalment due for the licence to manufacture the ammunition in question. These incidents show the utter unsuspectingness of Belgium and her endeavours to be on good terms with Germany. If any fear of Germany existed, however, we must suppose that the Belgian Government hoped by special consideration for Germany's commercial greed to avert the danger from itself, just as the Belgian royal family may have seen in their friendship with the rulers of Germany a guarantee of protection for their country.

November 9th.

Yesterday Kiau-Chau fell. It would have been more to the purpose to have given it back to China before Japan declared war. Anyone who believed —on the strength of all the heroic telegrams from

News from Geneva

the garrison about "holding out to the last man" and "fulfilling their duty to the uttermost"—that no German would fall into the hands of the Japanese alive, will be agreeably disappointed. Even the Governor is still alive. Unfortunately, Wilhelm II cannot this time bestow on both sides Orders *pour le mérite* as he did after the fall of Port Arthur.

A few days ago the ships of the German East Asiatic squadron defeated an English squadron off the coast of Chile.

In spite of this, it must be owned that little has happened and that little has changed in the eight days since I made my last entry. The Germans are still not advancing in the West, and in the East their retirement to the line of the Warthe does not yet seem to be completed.

Recently there have been reports dated from Geneva of disturbances in France, of a contemplated retreat of the French Army, and of disagreements among the enemy Allies. We have probably sent a correspondent to Geneva, in the hope of creating an impression that news unfavourable to France comes by way of French Switzerland. Only our gullible public will be deceived by this. Everyone else will have little difficulty in ascertaining that the original foreign reports, which our Geneva correspondent professes to quote, are either non-existent or forgeries. It would lead

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me too far afield to quote examples, of which I have collected a large number.

The German Crown Prince has meanwhile been exchanging "fraternal greetings" with Enver Pasha. We shall have more of such fraternisings while the world-war lasts, and I am afraid that Europe will in the end have to pay for them by the loss of her position in the world.

Having heard that England is beginning to intern the Germans in concentration camps, and having received no reply from the English Government to a proposal for an exchange of men not liable to military service, the German Government has taken the step of imprisoning all English subjects still amongst us between the ages of 15 and 55. They are mostly jockeys, trainers and men of colour. All other Englishmen are bound to report themselves twice a day to the police. One thus sees that madness and hate are more rampant than ever.

I have learnt from a reliable source that there have been, for some time past, several English submarines in the Baltic: they are supposed to have their base at Libau. In consequence, the German ships of war dare not sail out of Kiel, and even the trial trips of some newly-launched ships have had to be postponed.

Huge Indemnities or Ruin

The value of German money abroad has fallen 10 per cent. on an average. Austrian currency, too, has suffered a considerable depreciation, whereas the rate of exchange remains normal for all other countries. Indeed, Belgian notes have actually gone up, though there is practically no Belgian territory left. This valuation abroad gives food for thought. It is wrong to attribute it to hostile machinations. In financial matters there exists a very calm international spirit. Neither will the disproportionate excess of imports over exports suffice to explain it. Austria-Hungary imports almost nothing, while we at the present time buy a great deal there. The reason is far more to be found in the fact that no one abroad will keep German money, because confidence is lacking. People say to themselves that Germany is straining every nerve, that her finance is apparently sound, that she has devised the most crafty methods for providing herself with immense resources. But all that is of no avail unless she wins the war and her opponents have to pay huge indemnities ; otherwise her method spells ruin. And foreigners reckon with the fact that Germany is out in her reckoning.

November 10th.

The Turkish Government, in its proclamations and bulletins, appeals, just like the rest of us, loudly

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to God, Who knows the justice of its cause and protects it! And the Turkish Government, too, declares itself to be the persecuted party, assailed by deadly enemies and forced to rise in defence of Turkish existence. The chorus of criminal accomplices croaking forth this hypocritical stuff—what a concert for the ears of a Ruler of the Universe! The only excuse I can suggest for them is that they cannot give up the lies by which they live, at the very moment when they are fighting for their lying existence. If they force their peoples into war, they themselves are forced to lie. If they want to rule, they can only rule by political methods, which in their eyes are synonymous with the perversion of morality and truth, and with the exploitation of the people's ignorance, superstition, and faith in ideals of honour and duty.

Much more saddening is it, however, when those who hold, by means of their culture, intellect, and independence, a more or less impartial position between the *misera contribuens plebs* and the ambitious and intriguing governments, and should form a sort of international Court of Higher Appeal, behave in just the same spiteful, lying manner—as if they too were politicians, whose only hope of carrying out their schemes is to delude and deceive whole nations. Even Verhaeren has written a poem that I consider a disgrace. Of course there are horrible excesses; of course the

Indicting a Nation

level of civilisation is somewhat lower in one nation than in another. But no intelligent man is therefore entitled to behave as though it were henceforth impossible to draw any distinctions, or to look for any qualities in the enemy on which to base a hope of reconciliation and agreement. Whoever sees in a whole people nothing but licentious brutes that must be exterminated ; whoever makes a one-sided record of the enemy's crimes, eliminating everything that is in his favour or excuse—he himself is guilty of a crime greater than the excesses he denounces, because by his rabid hatred he has poisoned the minds of millions for years to come. Such injustice plays the enemy's game, not that of our friends. But he who is hard on himself and his own friends, when a quarrel has broken out, contributes towards reconciliation and diminishes the war-fever.

Nor is it any excuse for either side to say that the enemy does the same, is no better, is just as guilty of exaggerations and indiscriminate blame. Reason, judgment, moderation in these matters is at such a time as this the chief, if not the only, sign of higher feeling and of that true superiority which is bound to win—which the vanquished will not deny, but strive to imitate.

Our best-known writers and poets have, alas, shown themselves but inferior leaders and mediators. One cannot help feeling profound distrust

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towards them, one cannot help doubting whether we were right to surrender ourselves so completely to their influence, to their emotions and ideas, as we have often and gladly done in the past. It is to be feared that a hidden danger must always have lurked in their works—a danger we have hitherto carelessly overlooked. Their utterances during this war have shown us that they do not possess the intellectual superiority of which we stand in need. This knowledge ought to help us after the war to advance beyond these latter-day leaders of our intellectual life. A new generation must look for new leaders and poets, for better creatures than these angels with the hearts of devils.

If it is true that an author of the standing of Wells has recently demanded the pitiless massacre of all Germans,* one is almost inclined to cease abusing the stupidity and impudence of German professors, who are so keen, by a display of patriotic fireworks, to reveal the narrowness of their intellectual horizon to the world around them. The German professors evidently believe that no one can resist the desire to see "German truth" as cramped and limited as they and their compatriots see it themselves. But it cannot be too often pointed out how harmful and repulsive this attitude is. Some time ago, for instance, a German University Professor took a Swiss painter

* This rumour about Mr. Wells is utterly baseless.—*Translator.*

Modern Germany

to task because he had signed the famous protest against the destruction of Rheims Cathedral. In doing this, he arrogated to himself the right, as a former Professor of Basle University, to speak in the name of German Switzerland. A manifesto from Basle University, however, repudiates all sympathy with the views of this gentleman. An incident of this kind is bound to produce a painful impression.

From the days of my youth I have cherished a vivid recollection of the fat, vulgar German citizens of German towns. They liked to congregate frequently at inns, where they conversed noisily and pompously on all sorts of foolish topics, drank and ate heavily, and seemed to themselves the most infallible of mortals—while their wives stayed modestly at home to mind the children, overworking themselves and never dreaming that it was possible for their husbands to let them share now and again in their social pleasures, or to speak a kind word to them. Quite in the same way, modern Germany, successful and prosperous in business, held carousal and shouted all manner of rude, arrogant and preposterous things across the table or out of the window. And all the time it never occurred to the Germans that they had better attend to their urgent domestic duties before they made so merry; it never

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occurred to them that they must first raise their own people from brutality, misery and ignorance to a more human level, before they had a right to pose to the world at large as a great nation. All of a sudden the Government disturbs them at their carousal by declaring war. They hear voices from outside abusing them as Philistines and egoists. Up they jump in tumultuous excitement, and angrily try to prove how refined they really are, what experienced men of the world, what easy fellows to get on with. They are amazed that their foreign audience recognises them at the very first word as the dunderheads they are, and will have nothing to do with them. They are all the more conscious of being in the right because they have been disturbed in that eating and drinking which became every year richer and more abundant. Instead of learning, they want to teach. Their zealous patriotism bears witness to the excellence of their stomachs, not to the goodness of their hearts.

A letter from the Front brings me the astounding piece of news that the German Emperor himself, in an harangue to a party of officers, declared in effect that he now has prisoners enough and hopes the officers will see that no more are taken. The news is quite reliable. How this supplements the Army Order of the Bavarian Crown Prince !

Peace-Feelers

What a sequel to the Kaiser's own command in earlier days to the troops about to start on the Chinese expedition—"No quarter will be given!"

November 11th.

I was not a little surprised yesterday to hear from someone, who must know what he is talking about, that already as many as two peace-feelers have been put out between us and Russia, and that Russia was quite ready to enter into a separate peace. The first time Russia stipulated that Germany should drop Austria-Hungary. This was refused. For, as my informant explained, Germany herself may feel it to be necessary both to provide for the effective predominance of the German element within the Dual Monarchy, and to persuade the latter to make certain opportune concessions to neighbouring states like Roumania and Italy; but it was, of course, out of the question to give Russia a free hand in Austria-Hungary, for that would mean complete annihilation of Germany's position in Eastern Europe. I was not told what wrecked the negotiations on the second occasion, nor on what basis they had been resumed at all. Probably the intervention of Turkey contributed to upset them. I will not enlarge on this news further here. What surprises me most is that Russia should apparently be willing to sign

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- a separate peace. Perhaps she is only feigning to be willing and is sounding Austria-Hungary in like manner. That it would be agreeable to Germany, and worth some sacrifice, to get Russia out of the way, is quite clear.

When one reads, as I constantly do, in confidential communications, what uses Germany intends to make of her victory, it must give cause for fears and anxiety not only on humanity's account, but for Germany's own sake. A number of persons, anxious lest the professional statesmen, and even the military caste, may prove incompetent to make a satisfactory peace, are busy committing their own thoughts on the subject to paper and exchanging them with their friends. These productions are then instilled into the Kaiser and his entourage. A very influential gentleman, who was in the act of presenting himself at Main Headquarters with a composition of this kind, let me have a glimpse of it. It demands, *inter alia*, that the non-German inhabitants of the annexed territories shall have no political rights. Let this specimen suffice !

The French Ambassador in London rightly insisted, in a speech he delivered the other day, that the most shocking thing about this war is not the aberrations of the lower classes, but the

Germany's Intellectuals

sentiments of the so-called intellectual *élite* of Germany, the professors and such like individuals, who preach a kind of regulated and pedantic barbarism, with apparently not the least suspicion that there exists any intellectual community of ideas among other nations strong enough to pulverise German egoism. In fact, nothing more crude and superficial could have been written than what appeared the other day in a newspaper article by one of our leading professors of public law, a tutor and at the same time a valued friend of the Kaiser. Anyone who has read this article will understand what the Frenchman meant.

Someone whispered to me, as a profound secret, that all the chief international conventions with regard to war were invalid, because Montenegro, who had not signed any of them, was one of the belligerents. There was a proviso, he said, that in such cases all agreements between the remaining belligerents should become void. If it occurred to any of the belligerents to think of this proviso, incalculable consequences might result. This also is significant. We are such paragraph-ridden seahawyers, our morality is such an affair of externals, that we think every nation, directly it discovers that the agreements are not binding, will at once abandon all restraint and commit every conceivable outrage, merely because there is no explicit

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law to forbid it. Our own heart, our own intelligence, our sense of the dignity of humanity, seem to teach us nothing.

I hear from a Bulgarian to-day that Italy is making great exertions to persuade Bulgaria to enter a league of neutral states which already includes Italy, Roumania, and Greece. So far, he says, Bulgaria exhibits little desire to join. Italy has, however, promised to induce Roumania to give her back the Dobrudja. This treaty is directed against Austria. In any event, my informant thinks, it may have considerable effect on both belligerent groups, besides securing great advantages to its signatories.

November 12th.

Enemy ships have hunted down the little cruiser *Emden* in the Indian ocean and destroyed it after many daring exploits. The chivalry of the German commander has been winning high praise from the English for months past. It almost revives hope, in a war overflowing even more with hate than with blood, when we hear this praise of an enemy. I will not pause to inquire whether the Germans would pay a similar public tribute of praise to an enemy who had done them so much harm. It is enough for me to hear the universal chorus of approbation that comes

A Chivalrous German Commander

from the hostile countries. So it pays, after all, to fight chivalrously! And, after all, it is not true, as our papers assert, that the enemy calls everyone a barbarian who is fighting against them in the German ranks! In all probability only too few leaders of the same stamp as this captain have emerged on the German side. May his example evoke many imitators, great and small! May every German behave so that he can look with confidence to the enemy's verdict upon himself and his actions! Germany could win no greater victory than that her enemies should restore her honour to her, as the English have given back his sword to this sea-captain.

One would have thought that the mere reading of the newspapers would arouse sufficient horror of war to cause a cry of longing for truth and mercy to ascend from millions of hearts. One would have thought that a whole ocean of disgust must soon bury beneath its cleansing waters the disgraceful articles and illustrations which hatred and malice thrust upon us. Prejudice is no longer the right expression, it amounts to obsession. If someone were to compile statistics of all the crimes annually committed in the enemy's country and, representing the result as a complete summary of all his activities of every sort and kind, were to deny in explicit terms that any branch of human

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enterprise except crime, is to be found within the enemy's borders—his procedure would have been more or less the same as the methods of our Press.

Now and again, however, exceptions are made—of course inspired by higher authority. Thus, at present excuses are being thrown out on behalf of France and Russia, the object being to prove that the Continental powers are, one and all, the dupes of England. Another time it will be considered the best policy to turn the spear-point of our hate against a Continental country and to spare England.

Almost invariably, the enemy is reproached for exhibiting the same qualities and pursuing the same ends that Germany herself, above all other nations, exhibits and pursues at the present day. Take, for example, territorial greed. We hear of the territorial greed of Japan and Russia, and the territorial greed of England. Yet in the same breath our rulers whisper to each other the names of those foreign territories which it is absolutely necessary for Germany to annex. A traitor to his country's interest is he who does not see this urgent necessity. Another instance is the jealousy of German trade, and the conspiracy to crush it. But enough has been said. I have already outlined what demands *must*, simply *MUST*, be satisfied by a peace concluded in accordance

Spy-Mania in England

with the ideas of our men of light and leading ; and I am waiting with intense curiosity to discover what Germany will do if this " must " is not recognised by the enemy.

November 14th.

In England the disease of spy-mania seems to be running a specially malignant course. That is partly due, no doubt, to the Englishman's conception of the " foreigner," whom he imagines to be craftier, cleverer, and bolder than himself, but bound in the end to come to grief when confronted with British composure and trustworthiness. Around the level-headed Englishman there frolics or gibbers a world of semi-apes, whom he turns to his uses or drives back behind their barriers directly they annoy him. This imperturbable self-assurance, combined with a phantastic and credulous distrust of everything " not-normal," i.e. not English, has had the result that all Germans and naturalised Germans are now, in the eyes of Englishmen, spies. It makes no difference if an Englishman of German origin has sons serving in the British Army or Navy : he and his family are suspects and must be prevented from doing harm. Even the First Lord of the Admiralty, Prince Louis of Battenberg, whose sons are fighting in the English ranks, and whose nephew died for England, was attacked by the English Press

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because of his German descent and compelled to resign his office. The helpless German proletariat that filled the London back streets and now fills the concentration camps is suspected of secret relations with the German Emperor and his military forces. Poor miserable little German shopkeepers are hounded into the gutter because they conduct bureaux for spreading news prejudicial to England. Waiters and clerks, formerly happy to have escaped from Germany and her military service, are supposed to be a disguised army of invasion or special couriers of His Majesty the Kaiser. If German ships reach the English coast, it must have been the treachery of German spies that showed them the way. If English soldiers are surprised, the German spy has been seen, disguised as a peasant, who reconnoitred and betrayed their position. German spies appear in the uniform of English officers to the Indian troops and command them to come out of their trenches. They present themselves, dressed as Belgian army doctors, to act as guides to English troops, and guide them into an ambush. Wherever the English go, wherever they meet, eat and drink, work or sleep, abroad or at home, they are shadowed by a German spy. But England need have no anxiety; the sons of Albion will discover him; no disguise or make-up, no linguistic skill or alertness, in short,

Lord Fisher

nothing can save him from the steady English eye and the steady English hand.

One could almost laugh, if one did not pity the poor victims in England—those timid, clumsy, industrious fugitives who had hoped to exchange their native Germany for a better land.

The motto of the new Commander-in-Chief of the British Fleet that the English newspapers proudly publish beneath his portrait is quite charming: "*Hit first, hit hard, hit anywhere!*" No German hero could have clothed such a beautiful sentiment in such concise language—not even the Crown Princes of Bavaria or Prussia. And every deed that is possible in this war should surely fall within the compass of that motto. Especially the "*Hit anywhere*" carries with it a consolatory sort of general absolution, so that even the Germans themselves need no longer hang their heads in shame. Moreover, one ought to see the portrait of this Lord Fisher—a prize-fighter, coarse, menacing, in full-dress uniform, loaded with medals. He and his motto belong to Germany.

A day or two ago I was amazed to hear one of our most representative Germans acknowledge that we had determined on the war. It had been made easy for us to avoid it, he said; for Vienna

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and St. Petersburg had already come to an agreement. We were, however, out in our reckoning, since we had failed to thrash France within a couple of months. So much wisdom prompted me to remark : " Yes, quite right, that is my conviction too ; but how long have you thought so ? " To this he replied, with a most engaging smile, " The fact is, one doesn't say these things till the right moment comes—and *never* on any account in public ! "

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